

#61

go!

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JUNE-JULY 2024 | ISSUE 61

Drive & Camp

Greyton getaway

Where minutes slow to hours

Mozambique

Dash to Ponta Membene for your next long weekend

Eastern Free State

Drive where the cliffs call out

GEAR

16 camping gadgets for your furry friends

KYKNET OUTDOOR EXPO 2024

The latest and greatest caravans

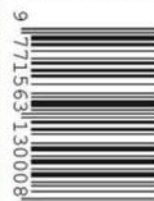
Lights for overlanding

We help you choose – p 92

Epic adventure

On two wheels through Myanmar

READERS' STORIES Men's day off the leash & a Landie hits half a million | **CAMP BOFFIN** The fiery bond between your camp stove and gas | **CARAVAN TEST** Stealth's Overlander Cub aims for the wild | **WE DRIVE** Isuzu mu-X, Opel Fontera and track day with 11 of Stellantis's best



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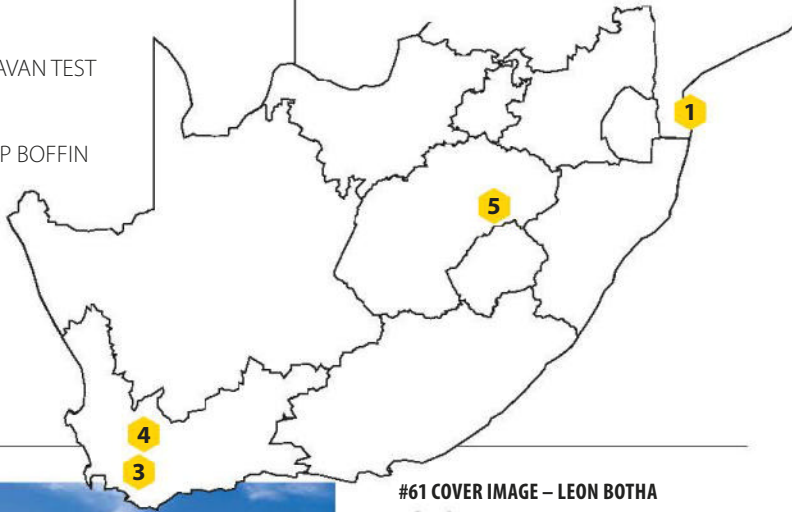
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#61 COVER IMAGE – LEON BOTHA

“ This month we are spoiled for choice when it comes to camping gear. Here I am outside the entrance to Kleine Eike, our first visit to this campsite (see p 40). The trailer is a brand new Cricket Max and it's made by TrailPod. Read more about all three Cricket models on p 14. ”

Camera settings Canon EOS 6D mk II; f9;
1/800 sec; 24 mm focal length; ISO-400

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MEDIA24

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2.1m x 2.1m x 1.5m
R3 530⁰⁰
2.5m x 2.5m x 1.9m
R4 580⁰⁰
3.0m x 3.0m x 2.2m
R5 430⁰⁰

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R3 810⁰⁰
2.1m x 2.1m x 1.8m
R4 290⁰⁰

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R4 920⁰⁰
3.0m x 3.0m x 2.2m
R5 710⁰⁰

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R14 240⁰⁰
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Max weight: 150kg

DC-3



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LUCKY WINNERS. Now the Wiggell family can all camp together. At the back are Dave, Claire, Frances, Derick with the tiny Willow, Julie and Travis. In the front are Reegan, Harley, Tristan, Finn and Paige.

Memories for a new generation...

I thoroughly enjoyed the column Pieter Redelinghuys wrote for this edition. He possesses a unique talent for crafting a sentence, a skill that has made me somewhat envious over the years.

In the nostalgic journey he takes us on page 120, he outdoes himself. His recounting of the Redelinghuys family's camping holiday by the sea evoked many memories of my own family's vacations.

The setting up of the tent with a struggling dad, the cookies baked long in advance, the silent agreements among siblings about things parents shouldn't know, the camp beds in the tent, the adults mingling... he might as well have been writing about my own family.

I always smile when I reminisce about our camping adventures when my siblings and I still lived at home. I hope my child will one day feel the same and cherish that warm, comforting feeling when reflecting about our own camping trips. For, as Pieter rightly notes, it is now we who bear the mantle and are responsible for creating memories for a new generation. It's a task we dare not take lightly.

It is therefore a great privilege to announce that Frances Wiggill from East London is the lucky winner of the Family Camper tent we gave away in the April-May issue, courtesy of Falkson Tents.

Frances shares that her family has been camping for years, initially just her and her husband, Derick, along with their two daughters, Julie and Claire.

However, the daughters are now grown and married, and six grandchildren have since joined the Wiggill family fold: Julie and her husband, Traviss McDonald, have two daughters, Paige (5) and Willow (2); Claire and Dave Sutherland have four sons, Harley (10) and triplets, Tristan, Finn and Reegan (5).



There are now twelve of them, but the problem is that the Wiggills' camping gear is really only adequate for four people – six at a stretch.

That meant not all the children and grandchildren could camp at the same time.

So they do it in shifts, with some of the grandchildren camping for a few days before the next group takes over. The only time all the Wiggills are together is for a day visit when they typically have a braai or make a potjie.

The Falkson Family Camper, with its accommodation for six, solves the problem for Frances and her family, allowing the entire family to enjoy the pleasure of camping together and creating memories for the grandchildren that will last a long time.

Frances notes the spaciousness of the Family Camper and the smart design of attaching poles with elastic and colour-coding them.

She is also impressed with the fact that the veranda roof can be closed with two side panels and that the manufacturer has paid attention to important details, such as safety, with the tent being lockable. And it all fits into one bag!

Enjoy your tent, Frances. And thank you for exposing your children and grandchildren to the wonders of camping and the outdoors, helping them to create memories they will cherish for the rest of their lives.

Safe travels.

Schalk

EDITOR

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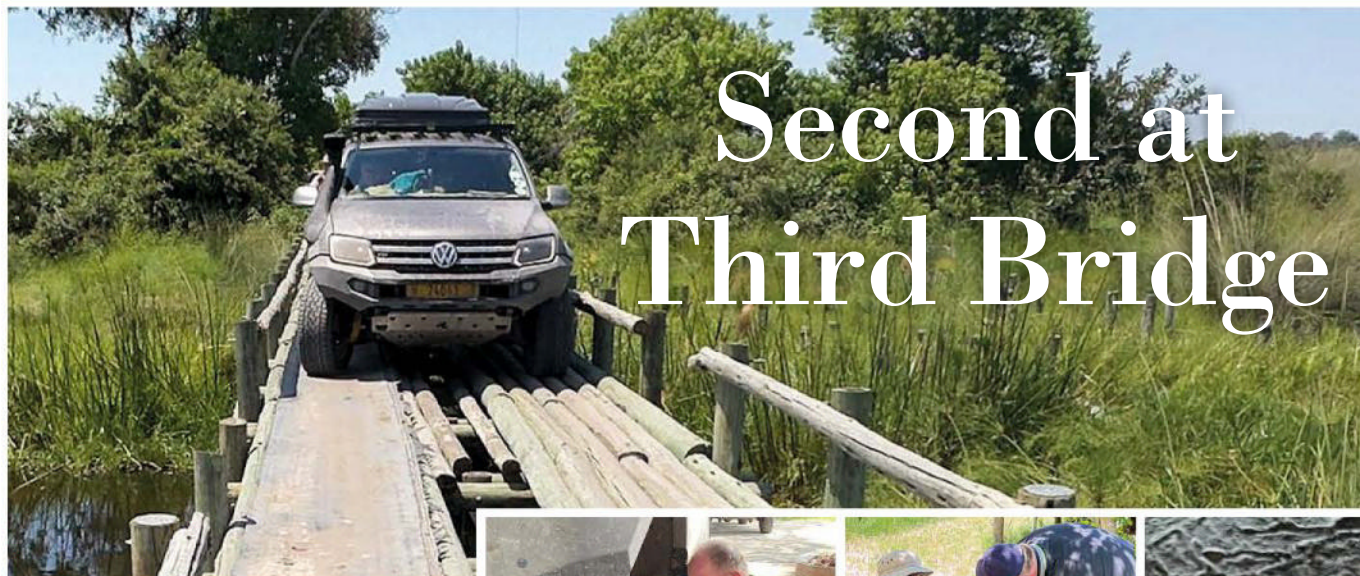
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We love hearing what's on your mind! Write to us at drivecamp@gomag.co.za and please remember to give your full address and contact details. *Drive & Camp* reserves the right to edit and shorten letters – and publish them in the magazine, on the website, and elsewhere.



My wife, Heike, and I operate African Footprints Tour Facilitator in Namibia, and for nearly two decades, I've been exploring Botswana. This includes visiting spectacular places like the Moremi Game Reserve, Chobe National Park, and Savuti in-between the protected areas. It's always fascinating to observe the wildlife, birds, and stunning natural landscapes.

This year, I embarked on a journey with five friends from Germany, starting from Windhoek. Our first night in the wild was spent at the Third Bridge campsite in Moremi. This area is renowned for its wildlife sightings. To get to Third Bridge, one must navigate over the First and Second Bridges, which can be quite the adventure depending on the state of these wooden structures. Occasionally, it's wiser to cross the channels next to the bridges, but only when the water levels are suitable. This time around, the Second Bridge was a bit iffy, but we managed to cross.



After spending two days at the Third Bridge campsite, we crossed the bridge again for another wildlife viewing session. Some of the logs were loose, making it quite nerve-racking. Unfortunately, one of the beams dislodged and with a loud crack, struck my Amarok's tie rod near the front wheels. We got out and immediately noticed the damage: one wheel faced left and the other right. The tie rod was badly bent, making it difficult to steer the vehicle back to our campsite. Luckily, one of our companions, Andreas Hintzen, a former mechanic, managed to remove the damaged part. He located an old welding machine and modified

the part, allowing us to proceed, albeit slowly. Just as we were beginning our journey, this setback was discouraging and stressful. I reached out to Heike back home in Swakopmund via satellite phone. She's always resourceful in a crisis and quickly contacted Peter Barth at Zimmermann Garage in Windhoek who promptly sourced a replacement part.

This vital component not only had to be delivered to Maun in Botswana but also to the Khwai campsite as we had moved on from Third Bridge according to our travel itinerary. By the evening of Monday, 5 February, at 20:20, Heike had arranged for Hendrik Paul Coetzee from

WINNING
LETTER

Peter wins a cooler bag worth R220. Whether you're a camper, fisherman, or sports fan next to a cricket pitch, this cooler bag has room for a lunch box and a 1,5 l cooldrink bottle. The lid also has space for a coffee flask. The interior is lined with PVC, which makes it easy to keep the bag clean and hygienic. The bag has a short strap that reaches over the top and attaches with a Velcro strip, as well as a longer shoulder strap if you're going to carry it over longer distances. It's an ideal picnic accessory or a padkos bag for a road trip. winkel.weg.co.za





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Tonga

HP Transfer and Tours in Windhoek to collect the tie rod early the next day and take it to the Namibian border. She then needed someone on the Botswana side to fetch it. Late that same night, she contacted Sianga Luther Tshenyegelo from Delta Guides in Maun through his colleague Babedi Charls, the front office manager at SKL in Maun.

Without any hesitation, Luther agreed to collect the part from the border the following afternoon and even deliver it to the Khwai campsite. He coordinated with Peter to ensure that all necessary tools for the repair were included. Undertaking the long and arduous journey from Maun to the border and back at night was a marathon effort. The next morning, Luther promptly delivered the part to us, a journey of another six hours.

Peter had carefully packaged the part with all the required tools, and together, Andreas and Luther installed the new tie rod. Luther's assistance, offered without prior acquaintance and only a modest prepayment for fuel, was solely focused on helping us – a gesture that truly deserves commendation.

Following the repair, we continued our exploration of Moremi and Chobe, creating unforgettable memories. We are immensely grateful for the spontaneous and extensive support from all those on both sides of the border. We've made a new friend in Botswana – Luther, also known as Jinxy, one of the kings of the bush.

Over the years spent in Namibia and Botswana, this incident stands out as a uniquely profound experience, and we're delighted to have met Luther. He is exceptionally respectful, dependable, and knowledgeable. In the brief time we spent with him, we witnessed his deep respect for the wilderness and a genuine understanding of the wildlife and natural environment, which has only deepened our desire to explore more of Botswana's splendid nature with him. It was an absolute pleasure and a significant enrichment to my life to have met Luther. We look forward to seeing him again and hopefully exploring more safaris in Botswana together.

Thank you once again, dear Jinxy, and our warmest wishes. Should you wish to experience a true safari in Botswana or simply need assistance, do not hesitate to contact Luther.

PETER H WITT
Swakopmund 🇳🇲

We asked our followers on Facebook to share their Easter pics with us.



Jaco Kok, Blouberg Nature Reserve



Anton Badenhorst Uitspan, Baviaanskloof
Camp Accommodation



Jean Prieur Du Plessis Waterval, West Coast



Pieter Visser Vygeboom Dam between Barberton and Badplaas



Johan Campher Stywelyne, Laaipelek



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What a line-up!

Manufacturers showcased their latest products at the KykNET Outdoor Expo in Malmesbury, Western Cape – and there were even some new faces making their debut.

TRAILPOD

One of the fresh faces at the expo was Danie Rossouw with his TrailPod. Even though Danie had never been a camper before, he showcased no less than three new Cricket models for the very first time.

Danie based his design on the classic tear drop. Initially, he built one for himself during the COVID-19 pandemic – this trailer, named Tintin, was the precursor to the production models that would follow.

It took Danie six months to build Tintin entirely by hand. A second version was built using a CNC machine, a project that took only two and a half months. And now, the TrailPod series is ready.

While mainstream teardrop caravan manufacturers mainly use fibreglass or marine plywood as building materials, Danie opted for plastic sandwich panels with a melamine finish for the interior. They're durable and lighter. The Cricket consists of four panels – the roof, floor and two sides – which are attached with adhesive. For the sides, two fused layers of 16mm each are used, while the floor has one 16mm layer and the roof a 12mm layer. The Burquip chassis is manufactured to TrailPod specifications and is robust enough for off-road driving, says Danie. You can also choose whether your Cricket should have brakes or not. And depending on the size of your towing vehicle's wheels, it's possible to have the same size on the Cricket.

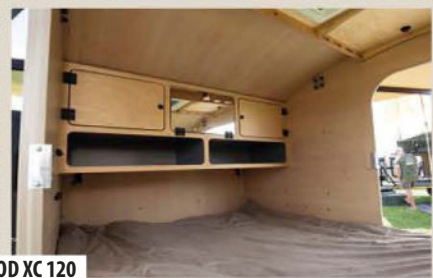
Danie deviates from the traditional teardrop shape as two of the three models, the Cricket XC 120 and 140 – which are the same width – don't have a kitchen at the back. This provides more space inside. In both, you get a small outdoor kitchen in a cupboard above the left wheel. A shelf folds down as a work surface, and the sponge cutouts in the cupboard has space



TRAILPOD XC MAX



TRAILPOD XC 120



for plates, cups, and glasses. You can use a portable gas stove on the countertop.

A unique new feature is a bunk bed next to the doorway between the two side panels. It's comfortable enough for a young child or even two little dogs to sleep on; otherwise, you can simply use it as a shelf

for items you want handy at night.

The third model, the Cricket Max, gets a traditional kitchen at the back, but without the bunk bed. The kitchen is equipped the same as the XC models but obviously more spacious. The Max also gets a stainless-steel worktop above each wheel



TRAILPOD XC 140

that folds down against the body when you're on the move.

Standard equipment in the Crickets includes a 40 Ah battery with a solar charger and 100 W solar panel; crockery for two; a ventilation opening in the roof; mesh on the doors; several USB ports inside and out; and reading lights. Equipment like the bunk bed; awning with side panels; bedding; a roof fan with different speed settings; wireless phone charger; and water or fuel cans that attach to the side panels are optional.

All three models are 3,5 m long, and the body itself is 2,2 m. The XC 120 is 1,2 m wide, and the other two are 1,4 m. The XC 120 has a tare weight of 390 kg (braked 430 kg) while the XC 140 figures are respectively 420 kg and 460 kg. All have a GVM of 750 kg, and the Max's tare weight is approximately 130 kg more than the XC 140's.

Price TrailPod XC 120 R184 960 (braked R197 460); XC 140 R195 200 (R207 700); Max R224 000 (unbraked, but with an option for brakes).

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TOJEM

Tojem, renowned for its Tonga fiberglass trailer, has unveiled a new variant. The Tonga trailer's body consists of a trailer with a top where two people can sleep. For the variant, the top has been simply replaced with a lid to transform it into a pop-up caravan. The interior sleeping space remains the same, but instead of fiberglass panels all around, a canvas is stretched. Consequently, the variant is considerably lower (1,3 m) when towing. To get it to its full height of 1,85 m, the rear flap is opened. Other than the lid, the rear flap is the biggest difference compared to the standard Tonga. The latter's rear door folds out to form a tent behind the trailer, while the variant has a smaller flap that folds down to the ground.

To lift the lid, you stand behind the trailer and pull it diagonally towards you. While the roof lifts, it also slides slightly over the rear section to form a roof about half a metre above the back. Now you have direct access to your bed with a canvas door that zips from the top down for privacy. In the middle of the folding flap is a flat cupboard to keep loose items together.

Naturally, the variant is much lighter than the standard trailer – about 350 kg compared to 480 kg. The variant's GVM is 750 kg without brakes, but brakes are also an option. The variant also comes with fewer standard features, but there's still a power system, water tank and pop-up roof. The two models are equally long and wide and come with the same wheels: 255/70R15 and a six-hole rim.

Tojem has expanded its business with a new division, VanLife. Customers can bring their panel van or camper for custom modifications. Size doesn't matter, and VanLife is ready for anything from a VW Caddy to a Mercedes-Benz Sprinter.

Price Tonga variant R155 000.

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METALIAN

Metalian, renowned for its off-road trailers, has recently taken over the production of the Armadillo off-road caravan, which will now be known as the Metalian M42. While the Armadillo's live on in the M42 – such as the two opposing doors and the shower tent on the right side – there are notable updates. The unique gas system with its two gas cylinders and control system remains, although the cupboard with the cylinders is now located on the left rear instead of the right.

The outdoor kitchen remains on the left side, but Metalian gives it a new look. The two cupboards are now at the same height next to each other, with the most significant change being the two-burner gas stove in the right-hand cupboard – one with a glass lid that is recessed into the countertop. This not only provides a sleek finish but also makes cleaning around the stove easy.

The utility shelf with the dish rack and drying rack at the end of the slide-out frame (with the fridge/freezer on top) now moves to the back of the fridge.

The laundry railing under its own



roof at the right rear corner remains unchanged, as does the cupboard beneath it. However, the cupboard now has a false floor panel for additional packing space accessible from the outside. The entry floor also received a false panel. The power system, previously in an open rack next to the bed, now moves to the door frame.

The chassis has also been redesigned, and the shock absorbers, previously installed at a 45° angle, are now vertical. Metalian provides the awning, one that opens 360°.

The standard trailer, weighing 800 kg,

is very basic with just the body, chassis, and wheels. However, there is a long list of optional extras, each with its own weight. For example, the nose box and wood rack cost R15 238 and weigh 46 kg. Other extras include protective covers for the nose box and front (R1 438 and 3,2 kg, and R4 082 and 19,4 kg respectively); a toolbox or jerry can holder (R2 910 and 13,7 kg); camping table (R1 455 and 27,4 kg); 360° awning (R20 413 and 35 kg); shower tent (R8 798 and 15 kg); jockey wheel holder (R1 898 and 24,9 kg); canvas bags in both doors (R3 278 and 6 kg); 160 W solar panel mounted on the



roof (R3 278 and 15 kg); 200 W foldable solar panel with carry bag (R6 900 and 8 kg); cold water system with a 150 l tank, tap, pump, and filter (R11 328 and 18,3 kg); and hot water upgrade with a 5,5 l gas geyser (R7 076 and 5 kg). These accessories add up to a total weight increase of 236,9 kg, bringing the M42's weight to 1 036,9 kg – and the price rises by R88 092.

The GVM remains at 1 800 kg – the same as that of the Armadillo.

Price R391 000 (basic) and equipped as described above: R479 092.

Contact ☎ 021 903 9623 📧 sales@metalian.co.za 📍 metalian.co.za



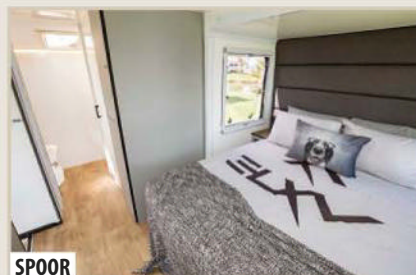
DIEP SPOOR



DIEP SPOOR



SPOOR



SPOOR

ELXV

ELXV recently introduced its new Spoor at the Caravan Show held at Gallagher Estate, where the Diep Spoor was also on display (see page 28 in our April-May 2024 issue). The original Spoor had a double axle, but the new version has a single axle. The most noticeable difference between the Spoor and Diep Spoor is the roof. The latter features a pop-up roof, while the Spoor has a fixed roof. The layout is otherwise the same, and both feature a slide-out bed, a first for ELXV.

What isn't immediately visible is the chassis: the Diep Spoor features an independent trailing arm system similar to the one used by the manufacturer on its Ghari model. In

contrast, the Spoor has a 2,5-tonne axle with leaf springs. Both feature an aluminium chassis unique to ELXV.

Standard equipment includes the bathroom; gas geyser; gas stove; a melamine dining set and Bauer pots; a 200 Ah lithium battery with a 25 A charger and a 9 kg gas cylinder. Some of the extras include a 10 000 BTU air conditioner and a 150 l or 220 l fridge/freezer – all 12 V (you don't get this often) – right down to a 20 l microwave.

The tare weight is 1 250 kg, and the GVM is 1 800 kg.

Price R630 000

Contact ☎ 082 444 2850 📧 info@elxv.co.za 📍 elxv.co.za

OVERLANDER

Rudi Pretorius, owner of Overlander, unveiled his caravans at the show two years ago, and he hasn't looked back since. Overlander is undoubtedly one of the most luxurious off-road caravans on the market, with two models available: the 500 Custom (single axle) and 590 Custom (double axle). These caravans are constructed from glass-reinforced plastic and feature a slide-out bed in the right panel.

A new option is an air pressure fan with a filter – the unit looks almost like the snorkel of off-road vehicles and fits neatly above the nose. Its purpose is to increase the air pressure inside the Overlander, making it even more dustproof while towing (the fan displaces around 8 m³ of air per minute). The inlet is discreetly installed inside the shower and draws power from the caravan's batteries rather than the tow vehicle's harness.

The wheel size of both models has been upgraded from 15 inches to 16 inches. As a further option, buyers can consider a 3 kW inverter, and the battery capacity can be increased to 400 Ah, allowing you to use your washing machine, air conditioner, and induction plate simultaneously in the bush, says Rudi.

Standard equipment on both models includes a National Luna 223 ℓ fridge/

freezer; electric cassette toilet; two-burner gas stove in the outdoor kitchen; Hansen 16 ℓ gas-electric geyser; 170 ℓ water tank with content gauge; 5 kg gas cylinder; 105 Ah deep-cycle battery; and Victron DC-to-DC charger. Some of the optional extras include a microwave (R1 886); Commander awning (R46 874); greywater tank with a shower pump (R6 055); and two 120 W solar panels with a Victron MPPT-100/20 regulator (R18 515).

The 500 and 590 Custom have a tare weight of 1 790 kg and 2 480 kg respectively, and a GVM of 2 000 kg and 3 000 kg.

Price Overlander Custom 500 R861 925; Custom 590 R972 440; positive pressure blower R10 580.

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ONE4ODYSSEY

One4Odyssey, who made its debut at this show last year, has made a few changes to its Bush Chameleon. The external shower extension at the right rear corner is no longer behind the usual white plastic cover seen on many caravans but behind a cupboard door. You also get a proper shower head on an extended pipe with a practical mixer tap.

The 150 l stainless-steel water tank at the chassis has been shifted more towards the middle of the caravan.

The flat cupboard above the fridge slide has gained a middle shelf dividing it into two, and the holes in the cupboard under the drying rack have been removed for a solid surface to prevent water pooling underneath it. The cupboard housing the geyser has its own light, but an extra light is now also installed on the outside – above the cupboard.

The space under the indoor washbasin is larger to accommodate a cassette toilet, and the switches on the power panel in the door have been changed. Instead of switches to control things like the lights, fridge, and solar power, the panel gets a smooth interface with touch buttons.

One4Odyssey offers two models: the Bush Chameleon 2 and 4 – the numbers indicate how many people it's designed for. The former has a bed on a slide-out frame that extends over the drawbar, while the latter has an additional bed that pulls out from the right panel.

Standard equipment includes a two-burner gas stove; pull-out washbasin with a tap and drying rack; 18 internal cupboards with canvas doors; an indoor washbasin with a mixer tap; 150 l stainless steel water tank with a pump; 6 l gas geyser; two 105 Ah deep-cycle batteries; a power system; and a 160 W solar panel on the roof.

Equipment such as a fridge/freezer, shower tent, and sliders are optional.

Both models have a GVM of 1 800 kg and a tare weight of 1 180 kg (2) and 1 280 kg (4) respectively.

Price Bush Chameleon 2 R389 900;

Bush Chameleon 4 R409 900

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one4odyssey.co.za one4odyssey.co.za



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BUSHWAKKA

Bushwakka has introduced a few models to its existing range, offering buyers a wider choice in terms of pricing and equipment.

At first glance, the new caravans appear more angular, as they do not have the rounded nose like the existing Sundowner, EVO, Classic X and Bhoma Fargo. The Rugged and UTE-r are more angular, and the basic building material differs as well. While Bushwakka primarily uses a stainless-steel chassis, the two new models feature a galvanised chassis. However, the body is still made of the usual stainless steel.

The two caravans look almost identical, and both have a rear door, but the beds differ. The Rugged features a fold-out bed from the right panel, while the UTE-r has an interior bed.

The Rugged has a GVM of 1 700 kg and a tare weight of 875 kg. A Victron battery system plus a 102 Ah Deltec deep-cycle battery are part of the standard purchase. The UTE-r is slightly lighter with a GVM of 1 500 kg and a tare weight of 850 kg.

Equipment such as a 175 l water tank and the 2,5 t axles are still standard across all the off-road caravan models.

Bushwakka has also completely redesigned its Weekender camper,

replacing the stainless steel chassis with a galvanised version. Just like the new off-road caravans, the body is still made of stainless steel.

The Weekender features a nose cone, a door on both side panels, and a rear door. Although it has a GVM of 750 kg, the axle is rated at 1 800 kg. There are no brakes, and the tare weight is 390 kg. It comes with 15-inch wheels, and the chassis has 10 leaf springs with Monroe Adventure gas shock absorbers.

Price Bushwakka Rugged and UTE-r R295 000; Weekender R99 000.

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AHA

Aha has made significant changes to its caravan. Standing behind it and looking at the door in front of you, the fridge has been shifted from right to left. Additionally, the internal shower, previously on the left against the panel, now folds out from under the fridge when pulled out.

The cassette toilet and air-con next to the bed have also been swapped, with the air-con now positioned on the right. And the table has now moved to the right side. The tabletop pulls towards you and even has storage space underneath when lifted. You can use the fridge as a seat at the table.

The gas geyser is housed in an external compartment in the left panel, which is now larger to accommodate a second gas cylinder. A new addition is a gas cylinder hanging on the countertop to the right of the trailer. You use a screw plate on it, and the whole setup protrudes through an opening in the countertop.

Standard equipment includes a double bed with a mattress (1,4 x 2,1 m); 110 ℓ water tank with plumbing, a pump, and tap; outdoor kitchen with fold-out table; electrical system with fuses, a 40 Ah dual-battery system, and charging system from the towing vehicle; awning; slide-out frame for an fridge/freezer; indoor and outdoor showers; indoor basin with accessories; and a step ladder. There are over 20 optional extras such as a 105 Ah deep-cycle battery with a 6 A 12/220 V charger (R7 139) or a 154 Ah lithium battery with a Victron Orion 10 A smart charger (R22 768); 90 ℓ fridge/freezer (R18 169); 5,5 ℓ gas geyser (R5 618); 160 W solar panel with 20 A controller (R5 219); standalone 7 000 BTU air-con (R10 603); two-burner gas stove (R2 585); induction stove (R2 279); and a 600 W inverter (R3 770).

Price R284 630.

Contact 012 804 6111

ahalekker.com



ATLAS OFF ROAD

Atlas Off Road is another newcomer showcasing its SD2 model. The model name is an abbreviation for "square drop" – Atlas's version of a teardrop. It has a similar layout with a square appearance.

The most significant difference from a typical teardrop is the outdoor kitchen. As expected, there are cupboards built into the rear, but your cooking area shifts to the left side above the wheel. Here, a flat cupboard opens up to accommodate a two-burner gas stove. The two washbasins and drying rack are on the other side and fit into a rack supported against the body.

The door of the rear cupboard folds flat, forming a convenient work surface away from the stove. The bottom two shelves have canvas flaps at the back with zippers, providing access from the inside.

Because the SD2's roof doesn't slope lower towards the back, there is more space above the bed – enough for you to crawl in headfirst and sleep with your feet near the doors.

The trailer is built from a fibreglass composite, with a steel frame and galvanised chassis. Standard equipment includes a deep-cycle battery with an extension cord and charger; an extra-length queen-size mattress; slide frame

for a SnoMaster 82 ℓ fridge/freezer; four corner steadies; and a spare wheel.

Optional extras include the dish rack (R3 200); 80 ℓ water tank for the roof (R2 900); knife set in sponge cutouts (R2 500); SnoMaster 82 ℓ fridge/freezer (R16 500); two-burner gas stove with a gas cylinder holder (R9 500) plus the 5 kg cylinder (R1 200).

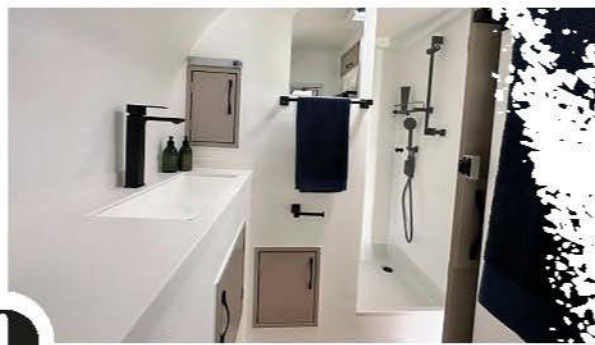
The SD2 has a dry weight of 850 kg with a maximum weight limit of 1 500 kg on the road. The axle runs on 15-inch wheels and is rated for 1 600 kg.

Price R189 000.

Contact 082 437 0623 info@atlasoffroad.co.za atlasoffroad.co.za

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ECHO 4x4

Echo 4x4 introduced its new Kavango KA2 two years ago – a derivative of the standard Kavango model of the time. The body was larger, and one of the most notable changes was the wider doors, but you could still consider the original model in the form of a Kavango KA1 HQ.

The KA2 HQ now takes the place of the KA1 HQ, but retains its original features. The regular KA2 not only provides sleeping space inside but also a fold-out bed over the A-frame, so it sleeps 4-5 people. Just like the former KA1 HQ, the new KA2 HQ accommodates two people with no fold-out bed. However, there is packing space in the area where the bed of the regular KA2 folds out.

Apart from the differences in sleeping layout between the two KA2 models, they are identical. They feature 17-inch wheels, the spare wheel at the back, independent suspension, a 125 ℓ water tank, a two-burner gas stove and gas geyser, and an EPP3-7 MK2-20 A power system with a battery and 12 V high-pressure water pump. The weights and dimensions are also the same: The trailers measure 6,06 x 1,97 x 2,28 m and have a GVM and tare weight of 2 000 kg and 1 280 kg, respectively.

Both also offer the same shower



options: a toilet and pull-out shower on rollers, or a shower tent. Among the other extras available for both models are various sizes of generators (the silent type), solar panels, a National Luna fridge/freezer (40-90 ℓ), and

lithium ion batteries.

Price R559 500.

Contact ☎ 012 345 3333 or 021 910 3737

✉ echoacc@echo4x4.co.za or

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KYKNET OUTDOOR EXPO CELEBRITY GOLF DAY

The public had the opportunity to play golf with celebrities a day or two before the expo. Pictured here are Reghardt van Vuuren of Cape Mobi Adventure and former Springbok Moaner van Heerden.

Mobi Lodge, like some of the other caravan manufacturers Invader and ELXV, supported the day with their Mobi-G golf carts. Mobi-G is a sister company of Mobi Lodge, which emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic. Owner Marius Ras says they have built more than a thousand of them, some of which have been exported to Saudi Arabia.

Among the other former Springboks who attended the day were Werner Greeff, Corné Krige, Marius Joubert, Charl Marais and Coenraad Breytenbach. Also present was Springbok Sevens player Shakes Soyizwapi, former Western Province player Johan Kapp, and Walter Stander, Stormers' Player 23. Singers Bok van Blerk, Wynand Strydom, Jay and Jannie Moolman, actors Cindy Swanepoel and Neels van Jaarsveld, as well as Rika Nieuwoudt, the host of *Toks en Tjops*, were also there. Elmiën Fitchet organised it all, and the day was made possible by GT Camper and Trio Events.

The next kykNET Outdoor Expo Golf Day will be held in July in Pretoria shortly before the show at Sondela.



PHOTO RUBEN DE KLERK

*Prices were valid for the duration of the show and may differ from prevailing market prices.

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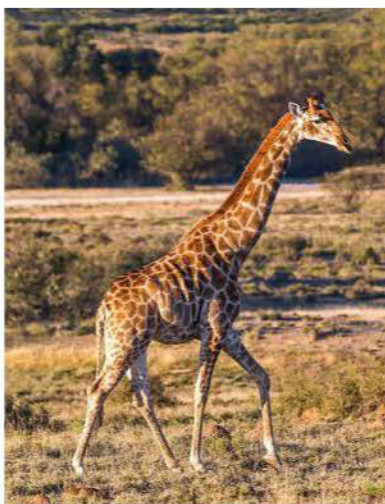
The Orange River serves as a splendid stopover between Gauteng and the Western Cape, and with the completion of the Waschbank campsite, you now have another superb option.

Waschbank is located on the Free State side of the river, situated on the eponymous farm of 1 800 ha, which borders 8 km of the river (from the N1 to the R701 between the towns Norvalspont and Gariep Dam).

The farm is owned by the Bloem family. Zelmari Bloem, who leads guest operations, mentions that the campsite was previously just a patch of grass. Guests visiting their lodge suggested they establish a campsite there. Zelmari and her team didn't let the grass grow under their feet, and they set up nine stands on various terraces, each equipped with power (standard and blue plug), a tap and a standalone braai.

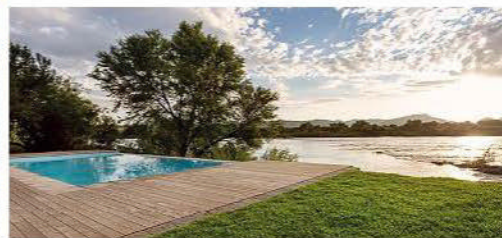
The stands are arranged in two rows stretching away from the river, with stands 1 and 2 closest to the water. The swimming pool is also by the riverbank (next to stand 1), and the bathrooms are nearby, slightly away from the water.

The bathrooms feature male and female facilities, and there are also two



family bathrooms – all are impeccable. If you prefer a private bathroom, you can book one of the family bathrooms at an additional charge.

There's plenty to do on the farm, not just overnight stays. Zelmari and her team offer game drives to see buffaloes, giraffes and various antelope. If you prefer exploring the world on foot, there are two hiking trails of 3 km and 8 km respectively, where you'll see impalas, springboks and waterbucks. Bring your fly-fishing gear, as the Bloems can arrange a guide to help hone your skills.



The last 1,5 km to the campsite is a dirt road, regularly maintained – Zelmari says it's smooth enough for a double-axle road caravan. The campsite is adjacent to a pecan orchard with the river in front of you. Other crops like potatoes, corn and wheat are also grown on the farm.

Price R340 or R460 per night per stand (depending on the season) plus R80 per person. Some stands can accommodate up to six people, and others eight to 10.

Contact 072 474 7465

info@waschbank.co.za

waschbank.co.za

Vehicle sales improve slightly

Vehicle financing company Wesbank reports that the sale of new vehicles in April this year increased by 2,2% compared to the same month in 2023. The figure represents the combined sales of passenger and commercial vehicles.

Passenger vehicle sales increased by 6,6%, however, the commercial market saw a decline of 9,6%.

According to Wesbank, buyers are financing their new vehicles over longer terms, and balloon payments are becoming less popular.



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Ironman and Isuzu care for kids

This year's Ironman challenge, in collaboration with Isuzu South Africa, raised R158 000 for their charities, the Isuzu Foundation and Ironman 4 the Kidz.

Participants in this challenging race must complete a 3,8 km swim, 180 km bike ride, and a marathon (42 km) all within one day. It has been held since 2000 and features divisions for men and women.

The funds raised will be used for refurbishing charity homes, transport costs, nutritional support, sports activities and medical expenses. This support ensures that the registered charity organisations continue their crucial work, providing essential services and opportunities for children facing various challenges.

"We remain committed to the wellbeing and development of children in the Eastern Cape. Through this collaboration, we aim to make a tangible difference in the lives of those who need it most," says Marcia Mayaba, the executive head of Isuzu's business development division.

Pictured here, from left to right, are Willie Spangenberg,

dealer principal of Williams Hunt in Gqeberha; Garth Wright, trustee of Ironman 4 the Kidz; Celestin Ndhlovu, vice president of planning, marketing, and corporate affairs at Isuzu; Gary Stephenson, trustee of Ironman 4 the Kidz, and Marcia.



Brand-new Ford

The new Ford Territory was launched on 4 May this year. It is powered by a 1,8 litre EcoBoost engine that delivers 138 kW and 318 Nm of torque and also features new start-stop technology that reduces fuel consumption.

The engine is coupled to a seven-speed automatic transmission with a wet dual-clutch system, although there is also a rotary knob on the centre console for manual gear shifting. The Territory offers four driving modes: eco, normal, sport, and mountain.

The body design has been revamped and boasts a new grille, daytime running lights,

and LED headlights that have been moved to a lower position, giving the Ford a more powerful appearance.

Inside upgrades include a wireless induction charger for your phone, a 12-inch colour touchscreen, and electronic dual-zone air-con with physical buttons.

As for safety, the Territory is equipped with blind spot monitors, hill descent control and parking sensors. The Titanium X variant also gets adaptive cruise control, automatically dimming lights, a collision warning, an automatic braking system for pedestrian crossings and lane keeping assist.

The Ford Protect warranty of four years/120 000 km comes standard plus roadside assistance for four years (unlimited kilometres) and a five-year rust warranty (also unlimited kilometres). Customers can opt for an extended Ford Protect service or maintenance plan: the warranty can be extended up to seven years or 200 000 km, while roadside assistance can be extended for an additional one or two years.

Prices start at R576 000 for the Territory Ambiente, while the flagship model, the Territory Titanium, costs R707 000 (optional service plan excluded).



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Images shown are for illustrative purposes only.





OPEL FRONTERA

LET THE SPARKS FLY!

Eskom will have to step up to accommodate the current surge of battery-powered vehicles. **Cyril Klopper** examines a nifty electric gem.

Opel recently announced the new Opel Frontera in Rüsselsheim, Germany, and it's coming to South Africa – we can expect it in early 2025. The Frontera boasts the manufacturer's new lightning bolt emblem, which is quite fitting as the Frontera will be available from the outset in a full electric version as well as a 48 V hybrid model.

"With its combination of rugged design, spaciousness, clever solutions and efficient drivetrains, our new Opel Frontera will appeal to a wide range of customers who want to stand out from the crowd. It is ideally suited to the urban and sub-urban environment while simultaneously offering a recharging experience to our customers," said Opel CEO Florian Huettl.

Opel describes the Frontera as a true sport utility vehicle, but what we can gather from Huettl's comment about urban use – and from

the pictures – is that the Frontera is not really meant for remote dirt roads. This is ironic, since the name Frontera dates back to the nineties when General Motors built a four-wheel drive Isuzu Frontera (Opel and Isuzu were part of GM at the time). This Frontera was sold in certain European countries as an Opel Frontera and the same SUV was marketed in South Africa as the Isuzu Frontier.

Isuzu has since increased its SUV's size, and today we have the spacious Isuzu mu-X, while Opel inherited the name Frontera for this smaller car that lacks four-wheel drive. For this reason, we classify it as a crossover rather than an SUV.

The new Frontera is nonetheless a good looking vehicle that follows Opel's unadorned design philosophy. The blunt nose and angular body panels give the impression that the Frontera is a rugged vehicle, and the absence of a traditional grille clearly indicates

that Opel is pursuing electric technology. Speaking of the grille: the Frontera's nose with its black plastic panel where the engine's air intake would normally be strongly resembles those of the latest Opel Mokka, Grandland and Crossland. Opel calls this panel a "visor" and the Opel emblem on it is referred to as a "blitz."

The trapezoidal air intake in the lower third of the nose emphasises the sturdy appearance of the vehicle. From the side, the dramatic C pillar definitely gives the impression of an SUV, as do the black plastic trim around the wheel arches.

Opel says the modern look and feel is repeated in the interior where smart design meets practical considerations. The wide horizontal décor on the dashboard and doors makes the spacious cabin appear even larger. Opel says its new steering wheel follows a philosophy of maximum comfort with



INFO. There is a growing concern that people are being overloaded with information and plastering a car's dashboard with digital screens may not be helping. The displays are nice to look at, sure, but at what cost?

“
The Frontera is not really meant for remote dirt roads
”

minimal distraction. It is apparently a “clean user experience” that will reduce digital stress.

The newcomer also accommodates those who prefer to rely on their smartphone by displaying the phone's apps on the Frontera's infotainment control panel rather than using native software. For older readers, this might sound like Opel is contradicting itself regarding “digital stress,” but for younger customers, it supposedly makes perfect sense...

Even the seats are innovative: there's a slot in the seat base where your coccyx fits so that

long journeys feel shorter. According to Opel, the upholstery is also made from sustainable materials that can eventually be recycled. Your phone is charged by a wireless induction charger – common enough technology – but this charger is cooled so your phone doesn't overheat while charging.

There are also two USB sockets at the front and two at the rear, plus a strap that can hold a tablet, and all the cubbyholes and storage compartments are lined with rubber so nothing rattles or slides around.

The Opel Frontera's cargo space is relatively large at 460 ℓ – significantly larger than that of a Toyota Urban Cruiser (353 ℓ), but slightly smaller than a Renault Duster's 475 ℓ. If you fold down the back seat's 60/40 backrests, the Frontera's cargo space increases to 1 600 ℓ. And if that's still not enough, you may load 200 kg on the Frontera's roof. (Roof bars are an optional extra.)

As we've mentioned, the Frontera will



The competition

Midweight crossovers for city life



From R347 900 Suzuki Grand Vitara

Suzuki is known for its reliable vehicles, and moreover, the Grand Vitara is good value for money.



From R389 700 Toyota Urban Cruiser

There's a Toyota workshop in almost any town, and the Urban Cruiser has a good resale value.



From R393 000 Renault Duster

The Duster is a huge success in South Africa, especially the 4x4 version will impress you.

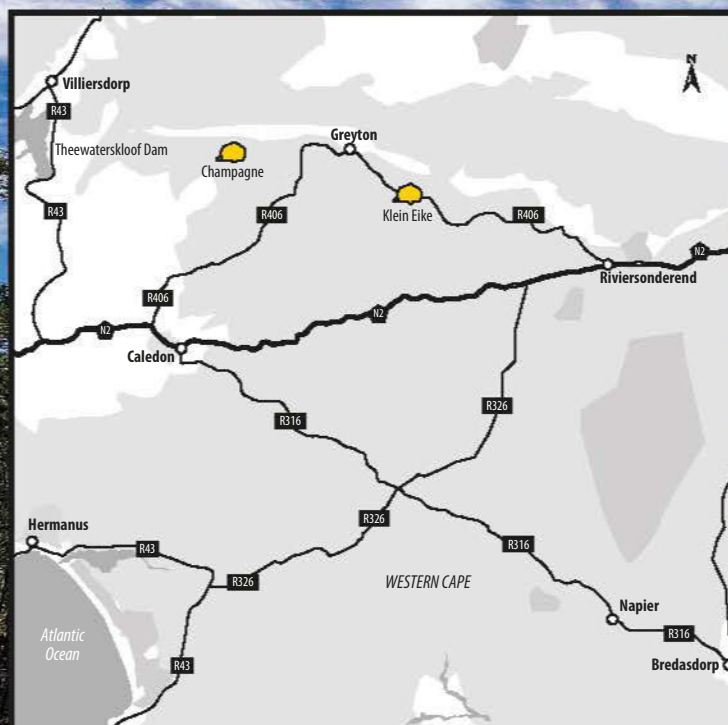
be available in full electric propulsion or as a hybrid model.

Opel has not yet announced which internal combustion engine it will use for the latter model, and prices and specifications will be announced closer to the official launch. 🚗

Nature's nooks

Mountains, rivers, a secluded village, and two delightful camping sites... that's all you need to trade the rat race for tranquillity. We unpack in Greyton.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**





When campers flock to a site on an ordinary weekend – and out of season at that – you know there's something special about the place beyond mere camping.

Here in Greyton, you're just an hour and a half's drive from Cape Town, yet the setting is dramatically different. You exchange the city and your four and a half million neighbours for fewer than 3 000 residents who have found their retreat here. Upon arriving at the campsite, it's just you and a few other campers seeking serenity.

At Kleine Eike, 12 km past Greyton, a group of sheep by the gate serves as the informal welcome committee. From this hill, you look down on the campsite, which emerges as a pure oasis with its green lawn stretching into the distance. At the far end, a young couple has already pitched their tent, while at the other, it appears a group of friends are reuniting after some time apart. Across the entrance road, an older couple has selected a spot for their rooftop tent on their double-cab bakkie, and further back, the next campers are arriving.

At Champagne, there's also lots of activity, just a bit more subtle. It's a smaller campsite than Kleine Eike and located 15 km on the other side of town. The sound of several young children playing fills the air, and nearby, an older couple in a chic motorhome, a Volkswagen California Coast, settles in. Next to them, a young couple with a two-man tent have brought their electric mountain bikes, and beside them, proper 4x4 enthusiasts, also with a few young children, set up camp.

It's clear: these two campsites attract a diverse group of campers, all in search of the same thing: silence in nature along the Sonderend River.

To the market

Most small tourist towns boast a market where you can purchase a variety of items, but shopping is probably the last thing on your mind as you seek escape from the city.

Around lunchtime on Friday, Greyton appears as tranquil as ever, reminiscent of places like Dullstroom or Clarens. There are no skyscrapers, only rural calm and homes that seem to have stood for a century. Past the Dutch Reformed church, dirt roads branch off from the main road. In front of one of the houses, four or five horses appear to be seeking new grazing ground. Just before the street corner, indeed, a resident attempts to chase a horse out of their garden.

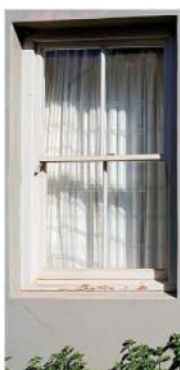
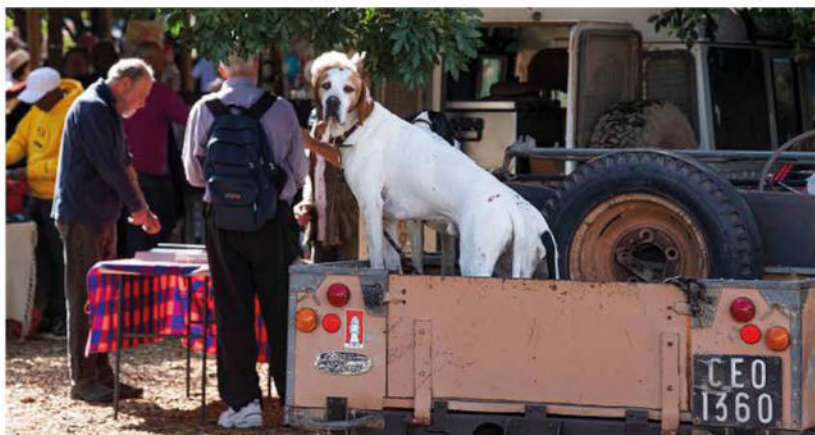
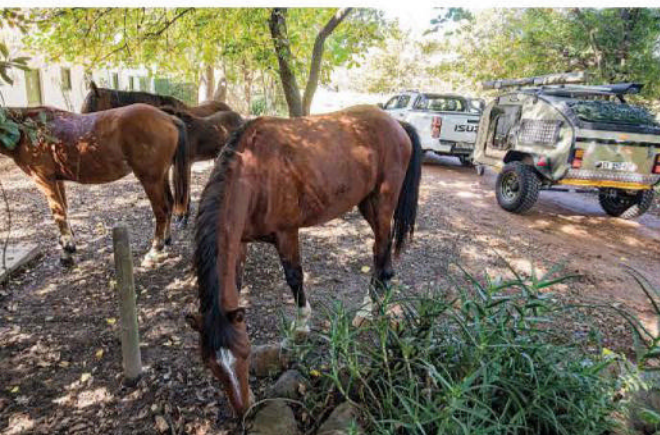
Nevertheless, you continue to the campsite, ready for the weekend to begin. Though it would be a sin not to visit the town's Saturday market during your stay. Positioned right across from the church, it captures the essence of the environment and its people, invigorating you with a burst of new energy. At a table laden with freshly baked bread, the aroma reminds one of Grandma's kitchen, and the ciabatta loaves (R40) are quickly snapped up. There's also fresh olive bread (R60), potato bread (R55), and various sizes of sourdough bread (R40-R158).

Your mouth waters at the sight of palm-sized pies (R40) and an assortment of quiches (R30) – from fig and brie to spinach, feta and mushroom to biltong and blue cheese. At the next stall,



DAY FOR POETRY. Shani Delpoit doesn't only compose a poem just for you, she even types it up on an old Imperial Litton 230 – every page is a work of art.





TO THE STREETS. Greyton's Saturday market has plenty of personality. It's not only for picking out fresh produce, but also to socialise with fellow townsfolk.



someone offers neatly packaged fresh meat – including braai packs – while a teenager stuffs a backpack with spinach leaves, hops on her bike, and rides down the main street.

It seems all the town's dogs are present too, all leashed. A fox terrier and a staffy, each wearing some sort of blanket jacket to which their leashes are attached, drag their owner around. A middle-aged man with thinning hair approaches with a large dog sporting a magnificent mane. At the market corner, two slender white

dogs that resemble hounds wait in the back of an open Land Rover that seems to date from the war years.

In the middle of the market, Shani Delpont sits with a hat at a table, typing on an old typewriter. Her sign reads "Poetry for Strangers," and she composes on the spot, in Afrikaans or English. She doesn't ask for a specific price for her work but relies on donations.

As you drive into town, you turn right two blocks before the market onto Ds Botha Street to head to Kleine Eike, but

you'll have to stop, for there's a stop sign that leaves you no choice: "Stop and smell the coffee."

Judging by the license plates, people are visiting from near and far: Worcester, Cape Town, Durbanville, Caledon, Malmesbury, Knysna, Wellington, Somerset West, Stellenbosch, Gordon's Bay and Montagu. There's even a diplomatic vehicle. Other traffic includes a young boy – still in primary school – galloping down the main street on his snow-white horse.

KLEINE EIKE

Left, right and straight ahead

Ds Botha Street turns into a decent dirt road almost immediately as you leave Greyton, and just 2,4 km later, you cross the Sonderend River on a single-lane concrete bridge. Then, 6 km on, you pass by the Oewerzicht campsite. As you follow the river's course, you see lush green pastures opposite, with a large herd of dairy cows and, beyond them, blue mountains – a scene reminiscent of a Swiss chocolate advertisement.

Oewerzicht, a tidy campsite we visited eight years ago, also borders the river and is Kleine Eike's neighbour. Just past Oewerzicht's office, the dirt road climbs a hill to Kleine Eike's gate on the left. From here, you drive up the back of the

hill until it bends left and takes you down some steep slopes. The road remains in good condition, but the incline might be too much if you're in a front-wheel drive vehicle with a heavy trailer. By this time, you'll have seen sheep in the camp next to you. From the farmhouse, the road becomes more of a twin-track, but it's still well maintained.

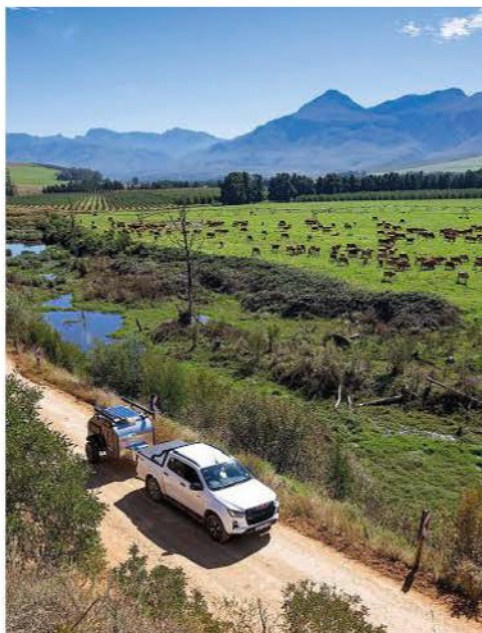
You don't need to stop at an office, as all the details of your campsite are finalised before your arrival. When you show up, you already know which stand has been assigned to you. Just 1,5 km after the gate, you enter the campsite.

The long building on the left as you enter the campsite houses the bathrooms. Depending on whether you get a stand on this side or that side of

the building, you may have to walk up to 100 m to the facilities.

The bathrooms are important for three reasons. Firstly, the obvious; then, to get wood and ice, too. Behind the building, bags of wood (R40 each) are stacked with a sign that reads: "Honesty Wood." Just remember how many bags you got so you can settle up at the end of your stay. The same goes for ice (R20) – the freezer with the bags of ice is in the door of the women's bathroom. (You are not allowed to store anything else in the freezer.)

The men's and women's facilities are further subdivided: as you enter the men's facilities, the shower cubicles are in a row against the opposite wall. Behind each wooden door awaits an enormous shower space – these are among the largest we have encountered. The shower



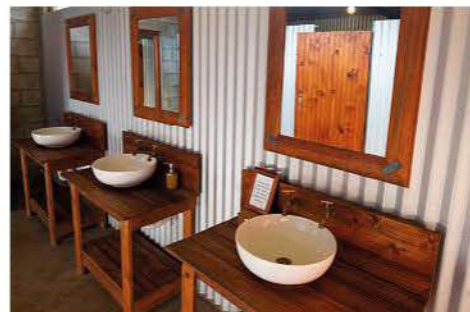
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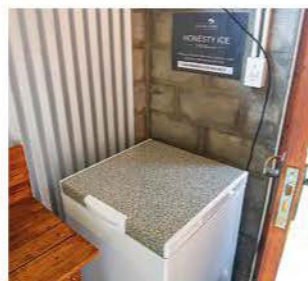
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ECHO CHAMBER. It's one thing to have a hot shower in a clean cubicle, but to have so much space! These shower cubicles must surely be the largest in the land.



area itself is open, with a low wall to contain the water. On one side, there's a large bench with hooks above it for your towel and clothes. The basins are down the wall on the right, each on its own wooden table with a large face mirror. There are also washbasins in the room next door (at the toilet cubicles), but there is only cold water there. The dishwashing area is behind the bathroom next to the wood.



While you settle in, some of the staff are still busy getting the garden in order: they're mowing the grass, trimming edges, and raking the grass. This hard work ensures you can walk around barefoot here with peace of mind. Your





Briefly | Kleine Eike



Campsite 23 sites on the loveliest lawn. Some have wooden shelters, others are along the river.

Ablution facilities In the middle of the campsite with some of the largest shower cubicles in the country.

Price R720 per night per site for up to four people; R180 per person per night for groups.

Arrival and departure 13:00 and 10:00.

Contact 082 809 9896

info@kleineeike.com kleineeike.com

Nearest town Greyton, 12 km.

Road conditions Just over 11 km of dirt road in good condition, with a few narrow spots on the farm.

GPS S34.102776 E19.680244

Drive & Camp says There is no swimming pool here, but it is safe to swim in the river and to fish.

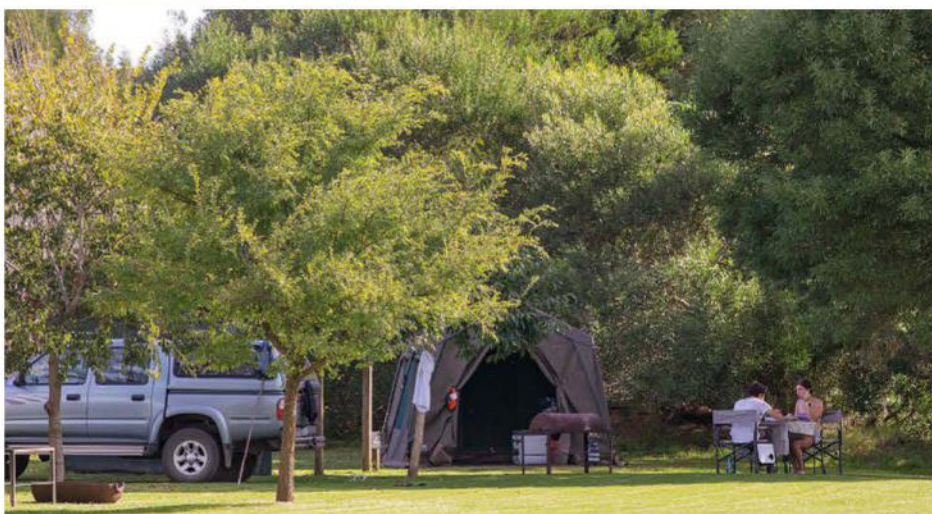
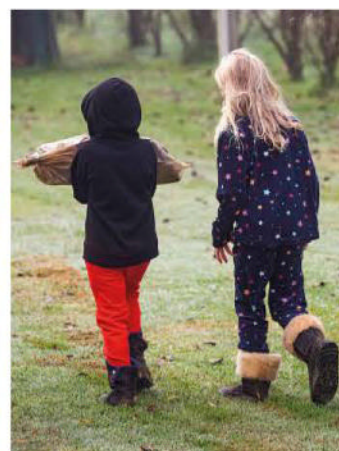
stand's grass is as good as your woven groundsheet, and you have no excuse not to kick off your shoes right away.

The stands are divided into three groups: six are lined up to the right of the bathroom; there are four on the other side of the bathrooms; and then there are stands all along the water.

One of the first six was assigned to us. All of these stands (plus the four on the other side) have a shelter made of poles and slats at the back of the stand with a table-and-bench set underneath. Your power point (regular household sockets) is about chest high on an upright pole, and the light at the top of the pole has its own switch. You might want to bring an extension cord.

The tap is behind your shelter, and the stand is spacious (about 17 x 15 steps). There are braais that look like halved gas cylinders, but bring your own grid. For your rubbish, there's a green-painted 210 l drum.

The riverbank stands are across the road that runs in front of the regular ones. Roughly opposite the road – but on the opposite shoulder – are towering



trees spaced apart, and that's also where you see the riverbank stands' power point. Here, too, you'll probably need a long extension cord.

We counted at least 10 riverbank stands, most of which have their own entrance and are set up on a lower terrace. You're close to the water, and here there's even a rapid where the water makes a delightful noise. (You can't hear the water from the stands at the back.)

Sit back for a moment in your camping chair and listen to all the farm sounds. As the sun's rays aim for the horizon, the sheep turn into golden fluff balls against

the green pastures. A flock of spur-winged geese flies over like a squadron of planes, and you can hear the air sighing under their wings. The lead bird makes a lazy turn not too far from the sheep and then finds a spot to land.

A tractor with a trailer comes by in the late afternoon and stops behind the bathrooms to replenish the wood. A woman emerges from the bathroom with ice: it's time to pour a drink and get the fire going.

At dusk, a half-moon glows over the river, a cow gives one last bellow, and the hadedas finally take flight as they bid the day goodbye.

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Right after the gate is a hedge of about 100 m on the left of the road, followed by a row of pepper trees

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CHAMPAGNE

Now heading westward

From the N2 side – between Bot River and Cullinan – you take the turnoff to Champagne 6 km before Greyton. You are immediately on a dirt road, narrower than the one to Kleine Eike. Parts of it are rockier, but you don't have to deal with dongas and ditches.

Before long, as the road winds down to the Sonderend River, you drive through fruit orchards before turning right at the gate. Just like at Kleine Eike, all accommodation arrangements are made in advance, and there is no need to report to an office. A specific stand is assigned to you, so there's no need to drive around looking for one.

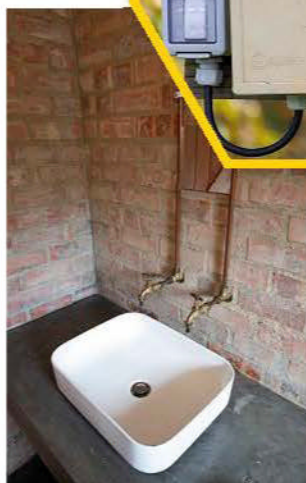
Right after the gate is a hedge of about 100 m on the left of the road, followed by a row of pepper trees. It might be tight for an extra-wide road caravan, but at first glance, it seems passable for regular caravans. About 140 m after the gate, a sign directs campers to stands 1-11 to the right and 12-20 straight on. (Stands 1-11 were still off-limits during our visit due to the recent floods.)

The owners have divided the campsite into four zones: the main camp, Willow Tree, the Bush Camp, and finally the Orchard Camp, which is a bit farther from the river and also on slightly higher ground. These few stands on a nice



DRY GROUND. Some of the stands were damaged by recent floods, but the Orchard camp was spared. You also have your own bathroom so you can camp like a king.





patch of grass remained unscathed after the floods.

Orchard comprises stands 12-19, and the main camp before it has six stands, also along the river. There doesn't seem to be much left of those sites. Meanwhile, the river flows peacefully by as if nothing recently upset it. Incidentally, Orchard is a very apt name, for if you stand in the middle of the strip of stands and look towards the river, you are embraced from left, right, and the back by apple orchards.

Even with fewer stands (for now), you're lucky if you get one of Orchard's ones. The strip of grass is 20 x 90 m, and one or two trees between the stands indicate your boundaries.

At the back of your stand – on the river

side – there's a round concrete table, with a sign in front of it displaying your site number. That is also where your power point is located, just like at Kleine Eike. The braai is similar, but about double the size, being a halved 210ℓ drum on a free-standing frame (do bring your own grid). Apart from the trees at the back of your site, there aren't many shade trees on the lawn. Your rubbish bin is of the wheeled type used by municipalities.

Where some stands previously had communal bathroom facilities, each one in Orchard has a private bathroom.

Champagne's bathrooms are truly unique. The elongated bathroom building is located between the lawn and the

apple orchard, with entrances at both ends of the building – each giving access to four bathrooms. But before you even get there, there's a dishwashing area on the porch at each door. The entire campsite can almost come together to wash dishes here, as there are four sinks on each side with a solid concrete countertop where you can stack about a year's worth of dishes.

Once through the door, you step into a narrow corridor, and then the lights automatically come on – the same goes for the lights in your bathroom. In each corridor, there are four doors with stand numbers on them.

Your bathroom is as spacious as a proper family bathroom, with a sink on a concrete countertop and the toilet



Orchard comprises stands 12-19, and the main camp before it has six stands, also along the river



STANDARD EQUIPMENT. Aside from the lovely lawn that you camp on, your stand also has a power outlet; with a light and a switch; a round concrete table and a braai. You must just supply your own grid.



Briefly | Champagne



Campsite Eight sites on level grass with shade trees on one side in the Orchard camp. Some of the other sites were damaged in a flood.

Ablution facilities A building roughly in the middle of the campsite with eight private bathrooms. Each bathroom has an indoor and outdoor shower.

Price Depending on the season, R550 or R870 per night per site. Maximum six people per site.

Arrival and departure 14:00 and 11:00 (adjustable on request).

Contact 084 510 9573 • camping@heideland.co.za • farmchampagne.com

Nearest town Greyton, 14,5 km.

Road condition Just over 8 km of dirt road that is occasionally rocky. GPS S34.067195 E19.485402

Drive & Camp says There is water, but the owners ask that you bring your own drinking water.



in its own corner. Along one wall is a long bench where you can get a row of kids ready for bath time. The shower is unusual – it's an open shower with a glass sliding door next to an outdoor shower. If you view the building from the outside, there are elongated openings in the roof – each one above such an outdoor shower. Luxurious!

You'll need to put your dry items either on the bench or next to the sink, as there are no hooks on the wall – at least not in the bathroom assigned to us.

Meanwhile, the kids keep one another entertained. The youngest of two brothers passes our site pedalling wearing a luminous green bike helmet, closely followed by his older brother in a bright

orange helmet. They both stop and seem to be hatching some sort of plan. The older one gets back on his bike, turns around, and pedals back to the first stand. The younger one pedals across from us, veers off the path, and pulls out a two-way radio: "Hello, are you there?"

Next to us, two families with small children are also camping. While one girl settles into a camping chair, her mother brings a hairdryer closer... and here comes Dash for one last dash. The legs of the black dachshund – from the first stand – are extra short, and it must feel like an eternity for him to walk to us at the other end. He knows his place now, and when you walk past "his" campsite, he gives a bark or two to make sure you know you're entering his world.

A state of freedom

The Free State is sometimes called the breadbasket of South Africa, but this province offers much more than just wheat and maize farms.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**



For some inexplicable reason, there exists the perception that the Free State is dull, flat, and boring, but that's a misconception, one that leads some South Africans to simply breeze through the province without truly experiencing it. For instance, if you're a Gauteng, you probably drive straight through the Free State on your way to your seaside holiday destination without even stopping for fuel.

Let's set aside a few days to get to know its people and attractions.

We start about 160 km east of Bloemfontein at Koranna Getaway (S28.88194 E27.31793). This 4x4 destination is on the farm Verlangdedeel,

offering camping spots for a multitude of adventurers. Johan and Isa Eksteen is a couple who are part of an extensive Eksteen family tree that has been farming in the area since the 19th century.

Two 4x4 routes at Koranna Getaway – the Plateau and Kloof routes – were originally farm roads (the latter specifically a forestry road), but Johan saw the growing 4x4 movement and opened his roads to the public in 2002. By 2006, Koranna Getaway was nationally known, and our magazine's predecessor, *Drive Out*, regularly visited. However, due to heavy rain, the routes have changed since then.

Today, Koranna Getaway consists of a large green lawn with stands for dozens

of off-road caravans and trailers (the stands aren't marked), equipped with electricity and taps. In the middle of the lawn is a spacious lapa with a fully equipped kitchen, bar, indoor braai and lounge. A short distance from the lapa is a tidy ablution block with separate sections for women and men.

If camping isn't your thing, there are also fully furnished cottages with everything you need for a comfortable stay. We're going to spend a few days at Koranna Getaway to tackle its 4x4 routes. Buckle up, because here we go!

The first trail, the Plateau Route, is the longest of the two at about 22 km, but it's



On the other hand, the Kloof Route gets a high rating of 4 out of 5 on the scale. Johan says you can tackle it with a standard rig, but you must engage four-wheel drive and engage your vehicle's diff lock. There's also a good chance your bakkie's side steps will get bent. Johan strongly advises lowering your tyre pressure to 1,4 bar for light vehicles like a Toyota Hilux, and 1,8 bar for heavier vehicles like Cruisers and Land Rovers.

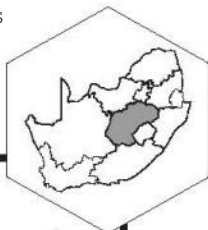
We felt sorry for the Ford Ranger we brought along and opted to ride uphill in Johan's 70 Series Land Cruiser bakkie instead. Johan drives this route regularly and makes it look effortless. He warns that visitors have nearly rolled downhill because they underestimated the route.

Atop the Koranna Mountain – named after the area's original inhabitants, the Korannas, also known as the Abatule tribe – you'll have a striking view of the Free State. Keep an eye out for waterfalls and wildlife in the gorge below, but especially look for small pools of water in the rock formations where you'll find tiny freshwater shrimp. Johan says these creatures have an extremely short lifespan, making it special every time he sees them.

During our days at Koranna Getaway, we enjoyed 4x4 adventures and searched for as many of the nearly 560 plant species, 277 bird species, and over 50 types of small game – including aardvarks, meerkats and blue duikers – found here.

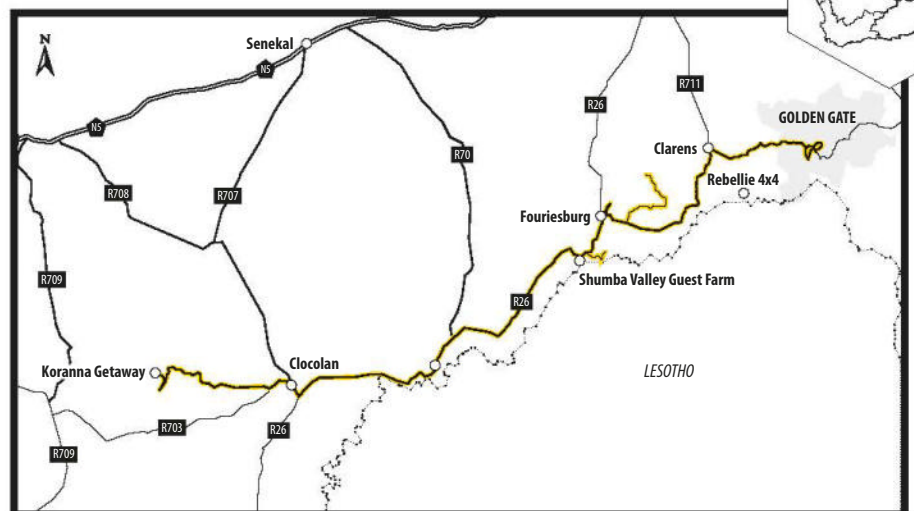
But it's time to bid farewell to Johan and Isa and venture farther into the Free State.

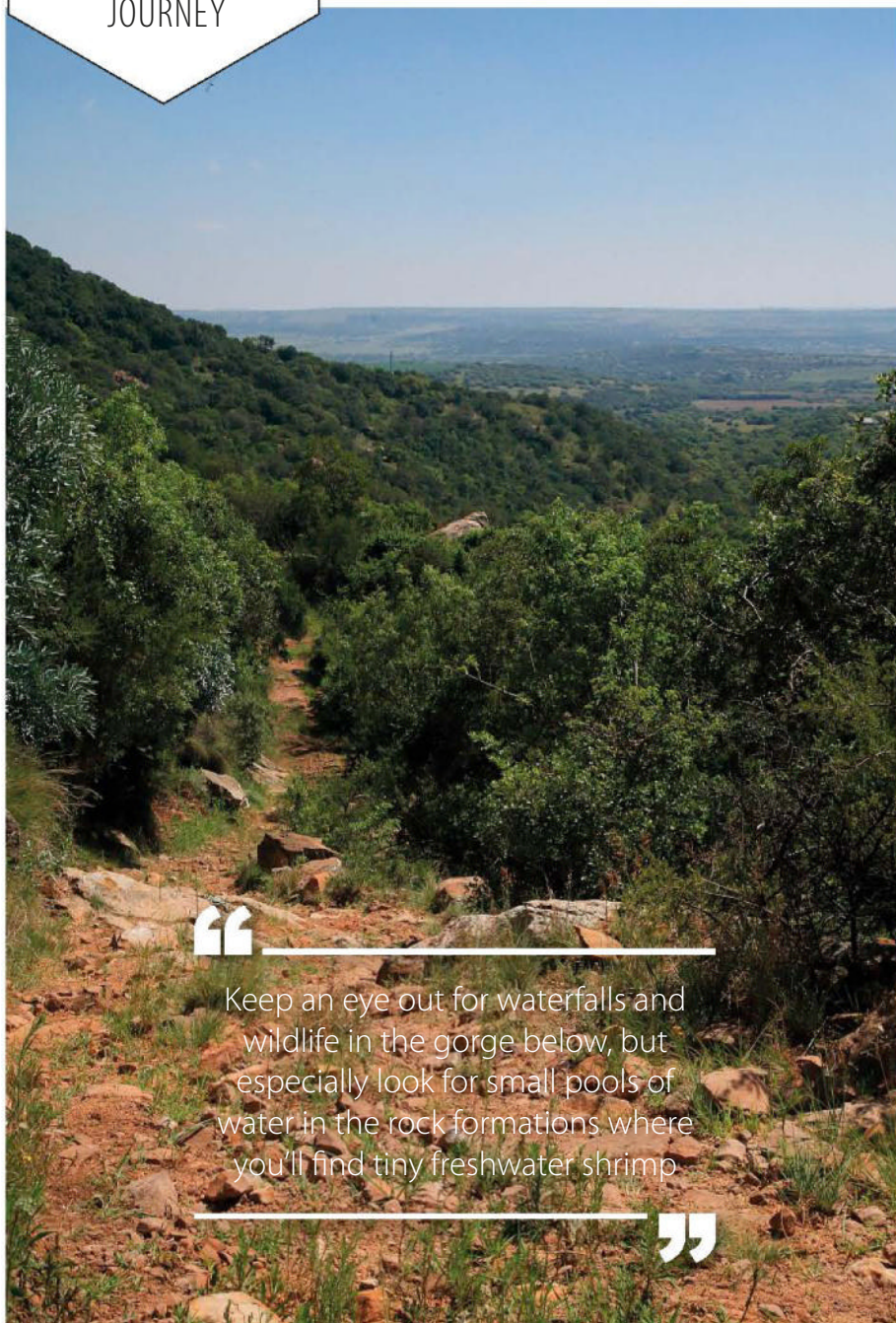
Our next stop is the Constantia farmstall on the outskirts of Clocolan as you leave the town on the R26 provincial road (S28.91245 E27.60374). The Constantia



also the easiest. However, easy doesn't mean it's a walk in the park, and you'll still need to engage four-wheel drive to master it. You can tackle it with a regular SUV, and chances are slim that you'll scratch the paintwork.

The Plateau Route has numerous lookout points where you can have a picnic, and at the foot of the route is the Witstinkhout bush camp. There's no electricity here, but there's a basic toilet and shower if you seek solitude and don't want to stay in Koranna Getaway's main camp. Allocate 4-5 hours for the Plateau Route, but it's more of a relaxing drive than a challenge – we rate it a 2 out of 5 on our difficulty scale.





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Keep an eye out for waterfalls and wildlife in the gorge below, but especially look for small pools of water in the rock formations where you'll find tiny freshwater shrimp

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farm's first cherry trees were planted in 1953 by Kempen Higgo – his son Gerrit took over the reins of the farm in 2012.

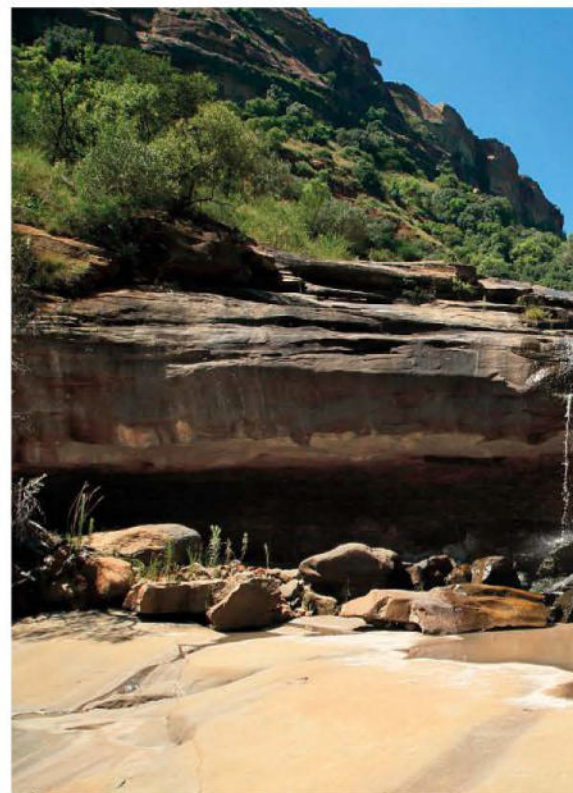
Be sure to buy souvenirs for your loved ones back home. As for cherry products, there's cherry ice cream, pastries, jam, syrup, and products you may not have associated with this fruit before, like cherry soap and gin. If you don't have a sweet tooth, you can also buy meat pies for R55 each – we particularly recommend the lamb and mint pie.

Leave the farmstall and head back onto the R26, through Ficksburg. We'll traverse two gentle mountain passes, namely the Kommandonek and Generaalsnek passes. Both are named after the Second Anglo-Boer War, during which the Winburg

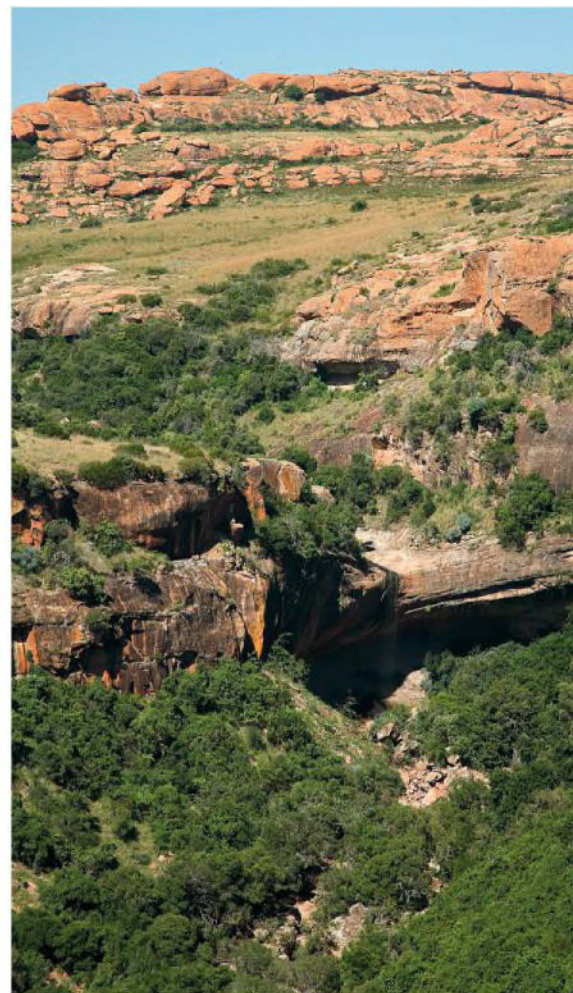
commando, led by General Marthinus Prinsloo, achieved successes against British forces. By the way, if you and Johan Eksteen from Koranna Getaway had discussed the Boer War, you'd probably have been told that most men in the Winburg commando were Eksteens.

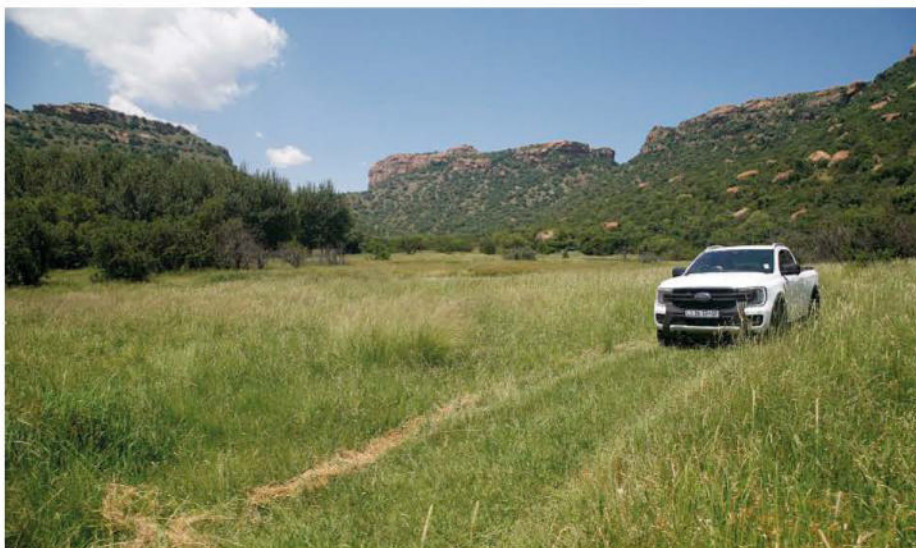
Upon the outskirts of Fouriesburg lies our overnight spot, Shumba Valley Guest Farm (S28.69648 E28.16268) – do not confuse it with the Shumba Valley Lodge near Lanseria when making reservations. Here, Bob Armour warmly welcomes you and directs you to your designated spot.

Shumba Valley boasts 20 camping stands, each equipped with power points, taps and bins. Some of the stands feature built-in braai facilities, while others



GREEN & RED. Coranna Getaway has several natural treasures such as waterfalls and hidden valleys. Do visit the Constantia farmstall (bottom right) when you pass through Clocolan to pick up some cherries.





have standalone braai drums. Bob – or Bobby, if you’ve known him long enough – mentions that he has operated Shumba Valley as a guest farm for 23 years, but his main income actually comes from his Simbra cattle stud – an American crossbreed between a Simmental and a Brahman.

Shumba Valley Guest Farm once had a pleasant 4x4 route along the Caledon River– Drive Out wrote about it in July 2016 – but Bob closed it down after the 4x4 craze died down in the previous decade.

Bob now focuses on catering to the needs of “swallows” (people who migrate with summer) and families seeking tranquillity rather than entertainment. So, you won’t find water slides and jumping castles at Shumba Valley, but Bob does run the Armoury Pub, and there’s free WiFi throughout most of the campsite. Bob recommends visiting the various attractions in the Fouriesburg area, and

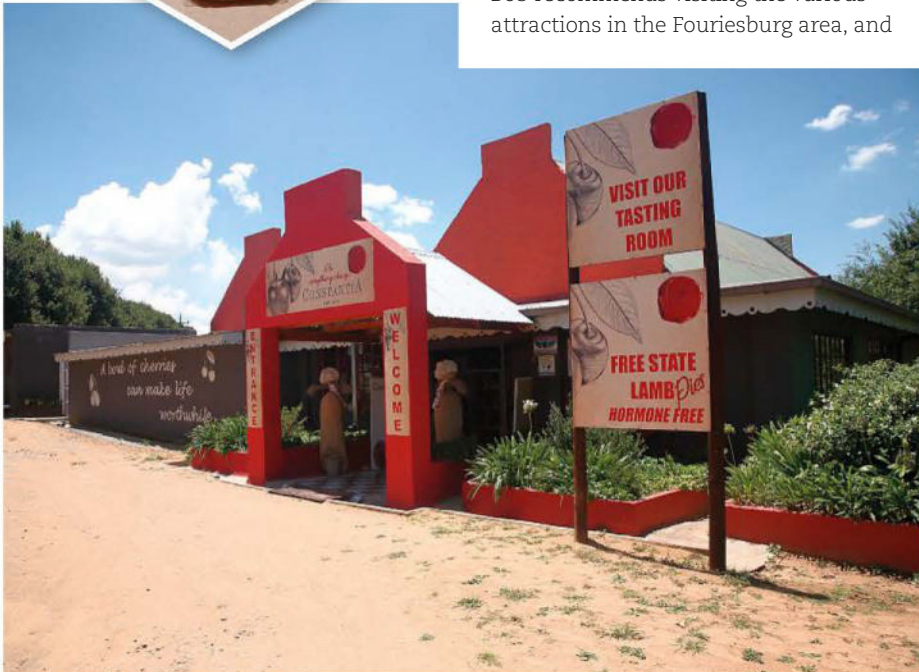
that’s precisely what we’re going to do now. Leave your camping gear just as it is: Bob assures us it’s safe. Let’s go for a spin.

Bob lists the top five attractions you must experience: the tunnels of the Meiringskloof Dam, Destiny Castle, Union House, the rock art in the pink cliffs, and the menu at the Orange Apple restaurant.

Destiny Castle is up first as it’s located on Bob’s neighbouring farm, Caledonpoort. Bob will give his neighbour, Devlin Fogg, a call and arrange for you to visit. The entrance gate is 2 km north of Shumba Valley at S28.68507 E28.17806.

From the gate, we follow a dirt track through lucerne fields to a sandstone cliff. From here, a concrete mountain pass leads us up against the cliff to the top of a hill where the road turns into a dirt track again. Although you don’t need to engage four-wheel drive, the road is too rough for a regular sedan.

The castle resembles a medieval English castle, and if we were indeed in England, this structure would probably be called Fogg’s Folley – a folly being a British term



for a costly but impractical structure.

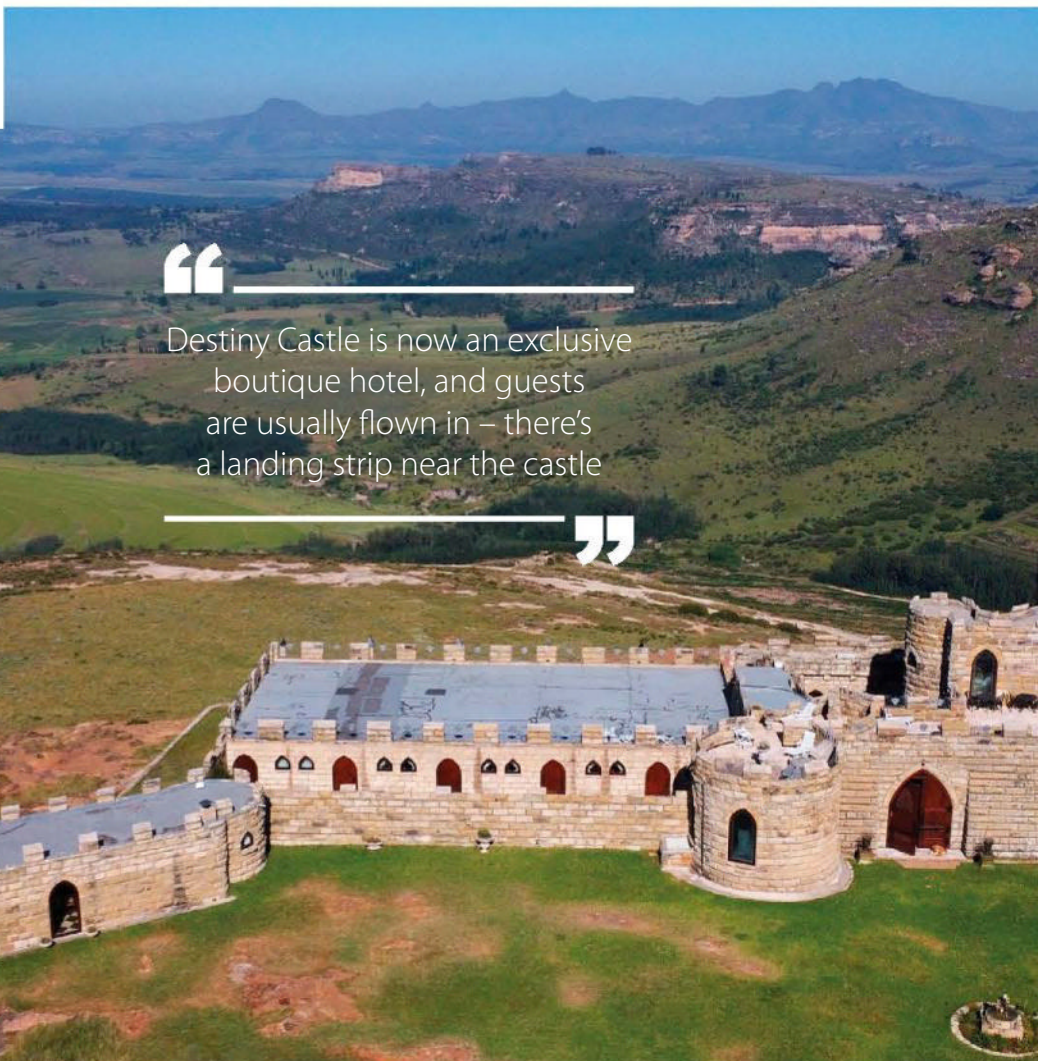
According to Devlin, his parents, Mike and Denyse Fogg, were driving through the district in 2006 in search of suitable land for a youth camp when they spotted an unusual ruin atop a mountain. The couple immediately drove to Fouriesburg to inquire. At that time, the castle was an abandoned construction site, but most of the main tower was already completed. The original project was reportedly abandoned in the seventies, and the Fogs saw an opportunity to resume the work.

The mountain trail was restored first, allowing second-hand Samil trucks to transport building materials. Mike and Denyse managed to track down the original stone mason in Lesotho – by then an old man – and he continued working on his magnum opus.

Destiny Castle is now an exclusive boutique hotel, and guests are usually flown in – there's a landing strip near the castle. The hotel boasts five spacious suites, a chapel, a five-star kitchen with its own chef and waiters, as well as a cinema, lounge, bar, terraces, dining rooms and a spa. Don't ask what it costs to stay



PEACE. You won't find much in the way of entertainment at Shumba Valley Guest Farm, and that's perfectly fine because there's lots to see and do in the area. Visit Destiny Castle (below) and Meiringspoort Dam (bottom right), but keep an eye on the ground because this is puff adder country (top right).



“

Destiny Castle is now an exclusive boutique hotel, and guests are usually flown in – there's a landing strip near the castle

”



here... (We can reveal that the castle has been on the market since 2020; you can make Destiny Castle and the 761-hectare farm yours for R20 million.)

Next, visit Union House on Bestersvallei, the neighbouring farm. Bestersvallei also belongs to the Fogg family and is for sale for R12 million. Union House is apparently an elegant farmhouse, but we decided to pass, as such property prices only deflate ordinary folks like us.

Today, we're going to explore another attraction: the tunnels at the Meiringspoort Dam. Drive towards Fouriesburg and follow De la Harpe Street, turn right into Steyn Street, and then follow the signs for the Meiringspoort Holiday Resort. Leave your vehicle at reception, purchase a route map and permit (R25 per person), and prepare yourself for a challenging hiking trail.

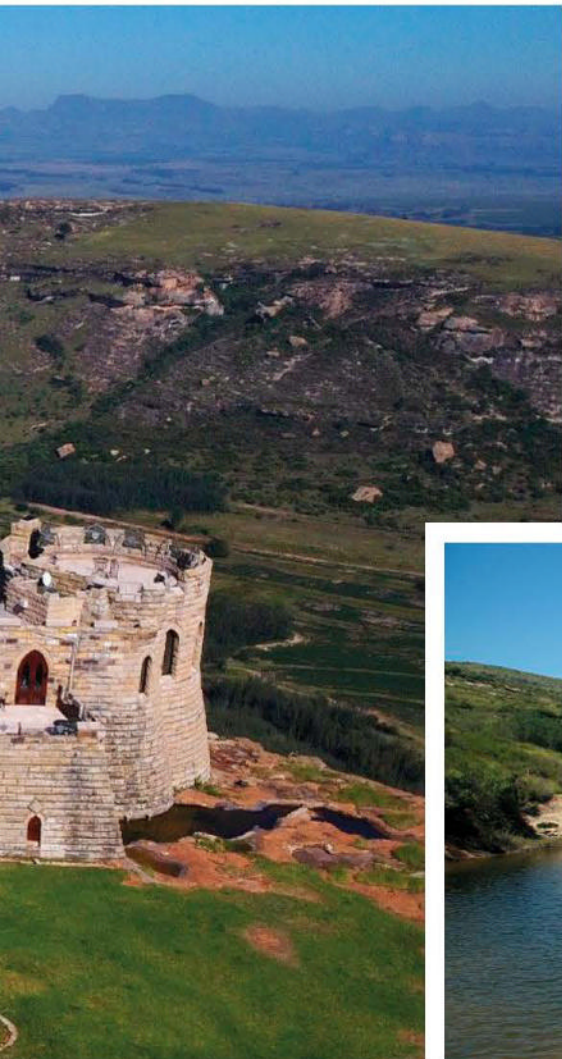
The first 400 metres are along a dirt path between chalets and the camping site. By the way, we wrote about Meiringskloof in the February 2020 issue of *Drive & Camp*, but the facilities have since been upgraded. Next, there's a 600-metre stretch with bridges, stone steps and cliff faces. It's definitely not wheelchair-friendly, and if you struggle with long walks, we wouldn't recommend this hiking trail.

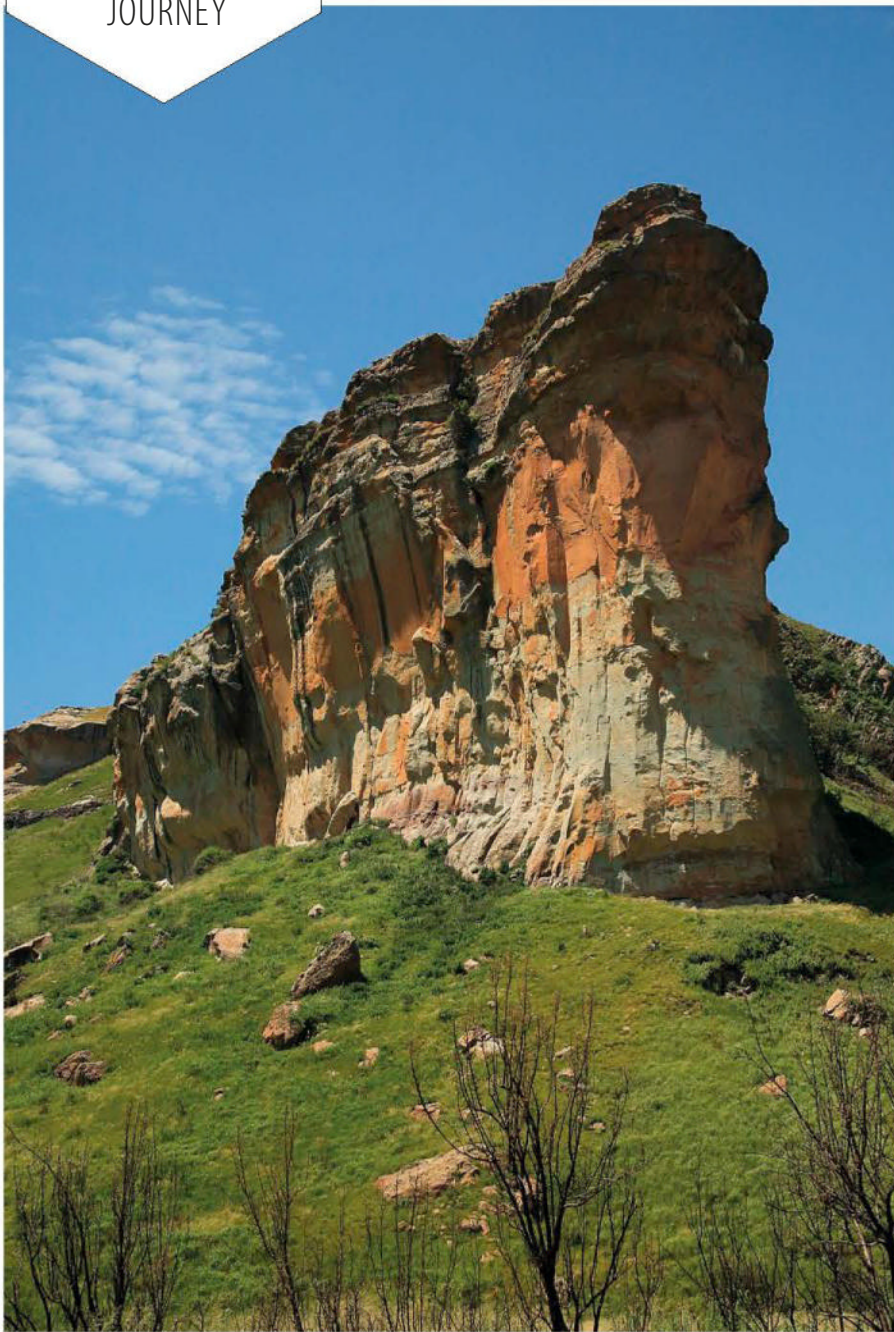
After about half an hour – if you're fit – you'll encounter a set of stone steps known as Jacob's Ladder, which will take you up a nearly vertical cliff around three stories high. An alternative is a shorter chain ladder (one floor less...). Both present their own challenges, but in our opinion, the effort at the chain ladder is over quicker, although Jacob's Ladder may be a bit easier if you fear heights.

Then follows another kilometre of hiking, past the Meiringspoort Dam wall, to the "tunnels" of which the people of Fouriesburg are so proud. The tunnels are a series of narrow crevices and cliff faces that indeed resemble subterranean waterways. They were formed over thousands of years by the stream feeding the dam. Getting to the tunnels is a bit of an effort, but the natural beauty makes it worthwhile.

However, there's an easier way: a 4x4 route to the entrance of the tunnels. To get there, follow Fourie Street out of town to a dirt road (S28.61009 E28.20847) that used to take you to the Didibeng Nature Reserve years ago. However, the reserve has long been closed, and the dirt road is now only used by farmers and the municipality.

The road gets progressively worse the farther you go. In fact, the people of





Fouriesburg warned us not to attempt the road with our flashy Ford Ranger – and that's why we opted for the footpath instead.

You'll probably be sweating by the time you get back to your vehicle. That's enough for one day. We can tackle the other activities tomorrow...

It's your penultimate day in the East Free State, and there's more beauty ahead. Today, we'll spend more time in the comfort of our vehicle.

First up is the Fairview Road outside Fouriesburg. Exit at Shumba Valley's gate and past Destiny Castle's entrance – then past Hoenderkop, a sandstone formation named after a tradition of toasting with a glass of mampoer here, until you reach the R711 provincial road where we turn right towards Clarens. After about 5 km, you'll find a road sign (S28.63900 E28.25701) that directs you to Fairview Estates.

It's a beautiful dirt road that takes you along the Klein Caledon River and around the 2 007 m high Ventersberg. We cross the Klein Caledon River twice with steel bridges and drive past sandstone cliffs and herds of cattle grazing knee-deep in emerald green grass. Return on the same dirt road, turn left onto the R711 tar road, and follow it over the Surrender Hill pass to Clarens.

Surrender Hill is named after the 4 140 Boers who laid down their arms and surrendered to the British forces here. Clarens is so named because former Boer President Paul Kruger died in Clarens, Switzerland.

Most of us are familiar with this tourist town in the Free State, so we won't dwell too much on what's going on here. In short, there are art galleries, boutique breweries, potters and an abundance of restaurants. Feel free to grab a case of

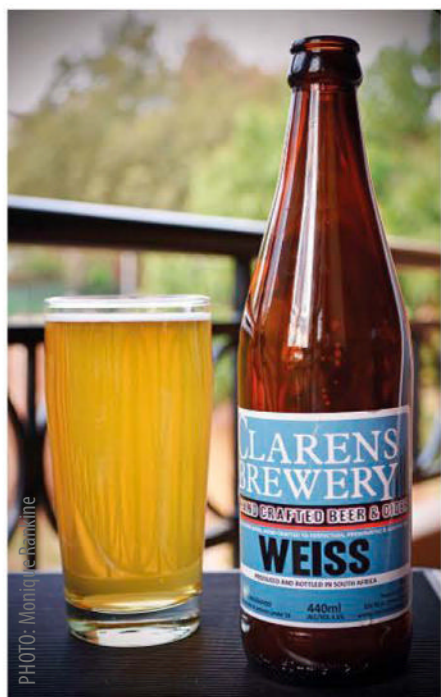
STAY GOLDEN. A monolythic rock guards the entrance to the Golden Gate Highlands National Park. It glows golden when the sun hits it at a certain time of day, hence the name of the park.

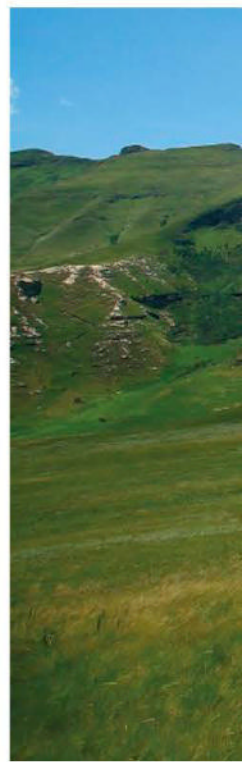


weiss beer at the Clarens Brewery – in our opinion, it's one of the town's best brews.

From here, we head to the East Free State's greatest attraction: the Golden Gate Highlands National Park. Turn off at the petrol station across from the Glen Reenen campsite and purchase a permit (R45 per person) at the park office next to the petrol station.

From here, we follow the R712 provincial road towards Phuthaditjhaba. The turnoff to the first loop is marked by a brown sign with a symbol for a tourism attraction. Turn right here and ascend the 9 km long Blesbok loop. It's a tarred road maintained by the park rangers, and any sedan can handle it. At the first fork, about 1 km after leaving the R712, turn right towards





the Langtoon Dam viewpoint. Here, you can see the hiking trail that starts at the Glen Reenen campsite and winds 30 km through the gorges, past the Cathedral Cave and Woodhead Peak, back to Glen Reenen.

Return to the Blesbok loop and continue uphill to a second viewpoint, Zulu Corner, with even better views of the national park. Just under 2 km after the turnoff to Zulu Corner, you'll reach Generaalskop, the highest viewpoint on the route at 2 153 m above sea level.

Now, we aim to descend back to the R712 provincial road. Turn right; after only 100 m, turn off onto the Oribi loop – just like the Blesbok route, it's also tarred. The Oribi route traverses flatter terrain, and although you won't encounter many viewpoints, there was more wildlife to see during our visit.

Keep your eyes peeled for eland, zebra, springbok, blue wildebeest and, of course, oribis – the tiny antelope (*Ourebia ourebi*) after which the Oribi loop is named. As for birds, watch the cliffs for Verreaux's eagles and bearded vultures, while the grassland is patrolled by blue cranes and secretary birds.

The Oribi loop is 4 km long, and your first stop is at the parking area for the vulture restaurant. A hiking trail takes you 300 m on foot along a cliff edge to a hide with a view of carcasses dumped by game wardens. Bring your binoculars or long-lens camera to clearly see the vultures digging neck-deep into a zebra carcass.



A short distance past the vulture restaurant's parking lot is the Drakensberg viewpoint, where you have a good view of the Lichens Pass on the opposite mountainside. The dirt road to the viewpoint was heavily eroded during our visit, and we had to engage our bakkie's diff lock to get through.

You'll have enough time for a little more exploration – we suggest driving over Lichens Pass to the Basotho Cultural Village. Here, there are archaeological exhibitions and cultural sights, but it's only open during peak season – the rest of the time, you'll find yourself facing a closed door. Then, head back to Fouriesburg for one last treat...

In Fouriesburg, you simply must order Ansje Steyn's bunny chow (R85) at the Orange Apple deli and bistro on Theron Street. Yes, we understand we're more than 400 km from Durban, the



traditional hub for this Indian-inspired dish, but Ansje's version truly hits the spot! She uses homemade bread filled with lamb or chicken curry. You can also choose between a mild curry or one with a spicy kick. We can hardly imagine a tastier lunch.

Think twice about heading home tomorrow morning because there's still the Rebellie 4x4 route outside Clarens waiting for you – in our opinion, one of the country's top five routes! (Visit the website rebellie.co.za for contact details.) We also never got around to seeing the rock art in the pink cliffs, and then there's Bob Armour's other neighbour, Fritz

“

As for birds, watch the cliffs for Verreaux's eagles and bearded vultures, while the grassland is patrolled by blue cranes and secretary birds

”



AN ENDING. The Free State has much to offer, from good food to cultural experiences, but the people you'll meet is the best part about it.

Kerkhoff, on Ventersberg Farm, who offers horseback rides through the Maluti Mountains ranging from a quick day ride to a three-day tour where you and your horse sleep by a campfire, just like the pioneers of old. Call Fritz on 072 371 9732 if you're interested.

Tonight, at your braai fire, while enjoying a weiss beer, you're likely wondering why some people think the Free State is dull, flat, and boring.

It's anything but!



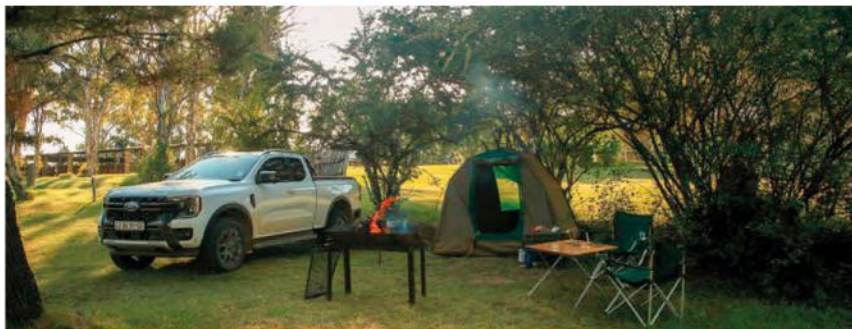
Where we stayed

Koranna Getaway

Unmarked camping spots in the main camp with electricity, water, braai facilities, an ablution block and a lapa. Several chalets across the farm are fully equipped if you prefer to avoid camping.

Contact 082 302 9638 (Isa) ✉ korannagetaway.com ✉ info@korannagetaway.com

Price Main Camp R150 pppn; bush camp R70 pppn; cottages R350 pppn (free for children under 10); R550 per vehicle for both routes.



Shumba Valley Guest Farm

Twenty camping stands with electricity, water, braai facilities, an ablution block and a cash bar. There are also six cottages accommodating up to 30 people if you prefer not to camp.

Contact 082 881 7063 (Lyn) ✉ shumbavalleymfarm.co.za ✉ barmour@worldonline.co.za

Price Camping R170 pppn (R285 per couple; R70 for children under 12); Cottages R430 pppn. Discount available for pensioners.

Sea, sand *and shells*



Spend your next long weekend as an international tourist: Mozambique is closer than you think.

Words and photos **Jannes Erasmus**

Ponta Membene is located in the Maputo National Park, approximately 60 km south of Maputo and 50 km north of Ponta do Ouro. The reserve covers about 2 000 km² of protected coastal, terrestrial, and marine ecosystems. Park officials call it the “jewel in the crown,” but there’s more to it than that. According to their website, this is also the top spot in the world for sea turtle breeding.

If you’re coming from Maputo and Ponta do Ouro, it’s tar to the park, and the park’s Futi gate is respectively 68 km and 41 km from the two towns. There’s also a second gate, Gala, further south, but it’s temporarily closed.

We drove from eSwatini over the Easter weekend to dip our feet in the warm waters of Mozambique.

Across the border

From Big Bend – which, incidentally,

lies almost on the same latitude as the southern border of Mozambique – the quickest route to Ponta Membene is through the Goba border post. It’s about 80 km of driving. Once you’re through the border post, you can buy airtime from people under a tent or even exchange your cash for meticals, the local currency.

After a short distance, the tar road changes to a dirt twin-track that takes you through beautiful bushveld – a taste of what’s ahead. If you need charcoal, you can find some in the village of Changanane. The locals talk about “carvão” which they pack in large white bags. You won’t easily find firewood or charcoal in the park, as there are no towns or shops near Ponta Membene. So, use this opportunity.

Just over 45 km from the border post, you reconnect with the tar road at a T-junction. It’s another 35 km to Bela Vista where you can buy cooldrinks for

the kids and also invest in the famous 2M beer to enjoy later. Just outside the town, there’s a filling station if you need to fill up – it’s another 25 km to the Futi gate.

At the gate, permits are issued, and the whole process takes around 20 minutes. While you’re here, take some of the maps and guides available on the counter – they’re full of useful information about the area. There’s a little shop at the gate that sells basic items like bread, water and fire lighters. At the back, there are toilets and a compressor in case you need to let down your tyres before you later inflate them again for the tar road.

Ponta Membene is about 35 km from the gate, but these are sandy roads with a few challenges – it took us an hour and 40 minutes. Then, 7 km before the camp, the road splits into five. The section in front of you is very steep – yes, with five choices! – and on a day when the sun is



SHE SELLS... These tiny squid shells are everywhere after the tide recedes (insert) and you walk past beached boats as if it were a parking lot.



baking the sand, it can be a challenge. Deflate your vehicle's tyres if you're struggling. Of course, you are already in the park, and by this time, you should have seen reedbeek, impalas, nyala, herds of zebras, giraffes, blue wildebeest and elephants.

The campsite in Membene was opened to the public in 2020, and earlier this year, luxury bathroom facilities were added. You can choose from nine stands, and between you and the sea there is only a dune. You camp so close to the beach that it's almost as though you can count the waves at night.

The stands are spacious – eight of them can easily accommodate 10 people – with plenty of shade. Stand 4 (the largest one) was assigned to us, but on stand 8 there is also room for 20 people. It is set up for groups and there is a kitchen with plates, cutlery, cups and glasses. You even get a fridge, a freezer and separate bathrooms for men and women. For us, they levelled four patches of sand for our tents. The boma is the perfect spot to unpack the camp chairs

next to the braai fire. The rubbish bin – made of steel – is nearby.

Off-road camper trailers will fit on stands 1A, 1B, 2, 5 and 7, while you can set up a rooftop tent at stands 1A, 1B, 2, 4 and 7. Your off-road caravan will fit on stands 1A and 1B.

Each stand has its own luxury bathroom and the layout are all the same: you have a toilet, a gas geyser for hot showers, and two basins with mirrors. In the shower, there is a wooden bench to sit on, and behind the door are a few hooks for your towel. The toilet is separate and next to the shower. Remember to bring your own toilet paper.

A dishwashing area with a double sink and a large counter for all your kitchen stuff is across from the wall with the mirrors. Your power point is by the bathrooms and has two USB sockets, two two-point sockets, and an ordinary household socket. So, remember to pack a long extension cord if you want to run power to your tent or camper. The current is 6 A, which means you cannot plug in hair dryers.

All your leftover food goes into

a special green bucket provided. It is later collected and taken to a biodigester to break it down into a gas that the park then recycles.

If you want to invite friends who don't have camping gear, there are also affordable self-catering units available.

There is little to no cellphone reception in most areas of the park. A neat wooden pathway takes you from the campsite to the restaurant and bar. Here you have access to free WiFi. Their smoothies are delicious and the fresh bread deserves five stars.

At reception, there's a small shop that sells essentials like ice, water and toothpaste. The prices look to be similar to those in South Africa.

The two swimming pools – one large and the other shallow – are just past the restaurant and also have plenty of shade around them. The best part of the pool is that you have a 180° view over the beach, even if you are shoulder-deep in the water. From the pool, you can walk down steps to the swimming beach – this is probably where you'll spend most of

WEEKEND BREAK

your time. Set your alarm for 5:00 in the morning for the sunrise – the sun paints a different picture every day. After the sun has risen, your day can begin.

During our visit, the seawater was at its lowest around 13:00, and then you can snorkel to your heart's content.

Because Ponta Membene is quite remote, there are not many people here. Thus, there are plenty of whole shells and coral. You need a permit if you want to fish from the beach, but you can also bring your boat or jet ski. There is a place where boats can be launched. Just be careful, as there are many rocks. Some of the fish may be caught on a catch-and-release basis, but you also see quite a few barracudas being pulled out and cleaned right before your eyes on the beach.

Take a day and drive around the park. Visit Santa Maria farther north. It's a small fishing community with Inhaca Island beyond it. To get there, you drive a 46 km twin-track with thick sand. On the way there, you see mangrove forests with the mud underneath full of tracks from birds and antelope.

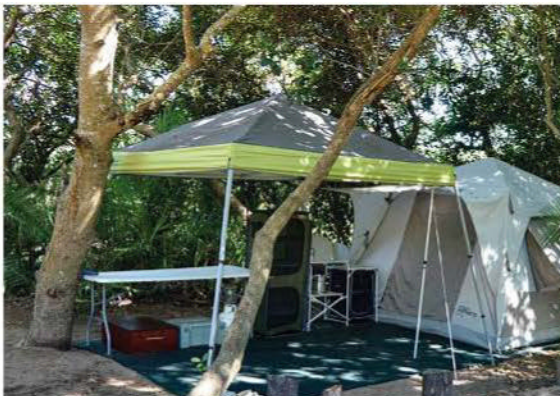
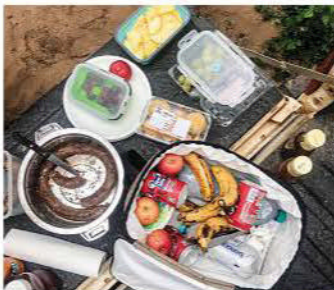
Eventually, you come to a gate where you leave the park and see quite a few more people. As you pass groups of children, you hear them asking for sweets. Soccer is popular, and you'll see matches taking place along the road as you progress. About a kilometre before the hamlet Nhonguane is a modest filling station. Nhonguane consists mainly of holiday resorts, guest houses – and friendly people.

On the beach, the sea retreats so far that you see boats lying on the sand. Now is the time to snack on last night's leftover braai with the sound of the waves far away.

But we were looking for a beach "with water." We met two locals outside the town who tell us to head for Ponta Abril, 5 km from Nhonguane – a dead quiet beach. There are also loads of whole shells and something less whole: the shipwreck of the Blue Wave. This boat lies on its side against sharp volcanic rocks. Inside are two large rooms, a living room, and the kitchen. The deck still has all the thin spars on, but the wreck reminds you how mighty the sea can be. It's time to pack all your shells and make one last round at Ponta Membene before you head home.



PULL UP A CHAIR. As soon as you're back from the beach it's time to pour a cold one and chat about tonight's braai. Whatever you do, don't talk about work.





Briefly | Ponta Membene



Campsite Nine spacious stands that are big enough for more than one family. You camp on sand, there is plenty of shade, the power point is by your bathroom and WiFi is available at the bar and the office. You have a fire pit (without a grid).

Abution facilities Your own luxurious and new bathroom that includes a dishwashing area.

Price M600 (R213) pppd (or M2 400 or R850 per week) to enter the park, M900 (R319) for your vehicle, and M400-M600 (R142-R213) pn per site. Minimum of 10 people during peak times and two outside the season; on stand 8, the minimum outside peak is eight people.

Arrival and departure 14:00 and 11:00.

Contact 00 258 87 016 2730

(WhatsApp) office@membene.co.mz

membene.co.mz

Nearest SA border post Kosi Bay, 40 km; Komatipoort, 167 km (to the park gate).

Road conditions 35 km of sand road from the nearest tar.

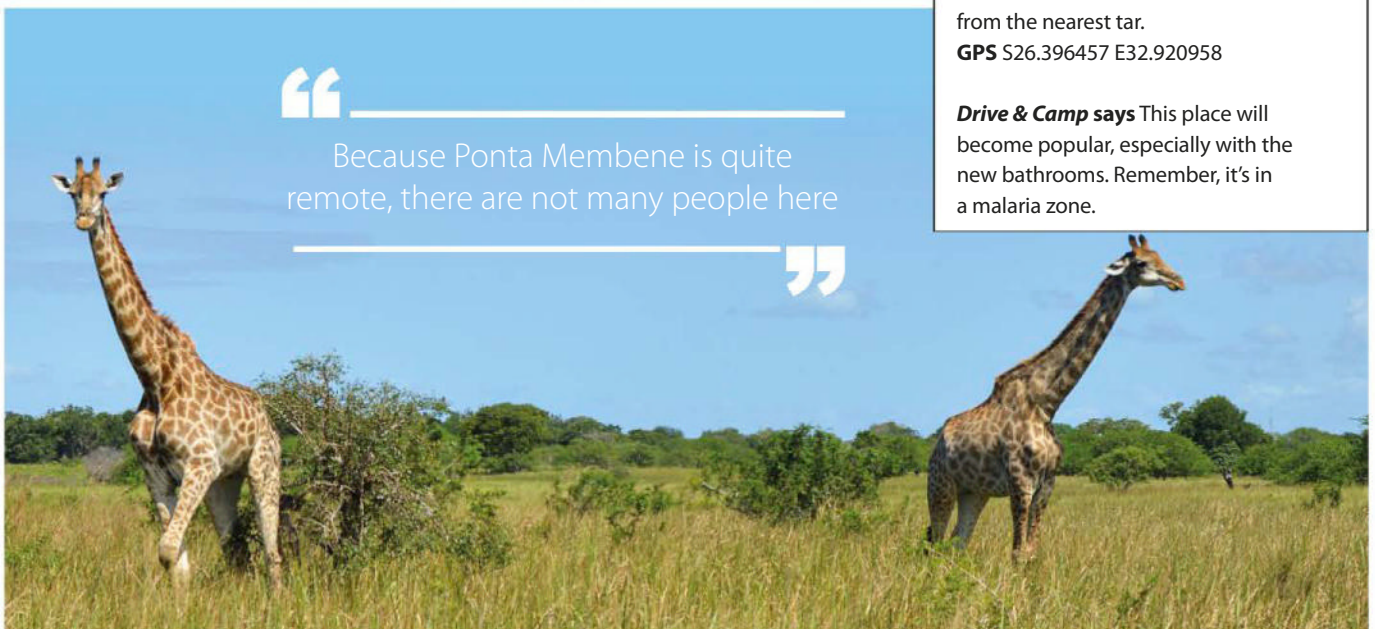
GPS S26.396457 E32.920958

Drive & Camp says This place will become popular, especially with the new bathrooms. Remember, it's in a malaria zone.

“

Because Ponta Membene is quite remote, there are not many people here

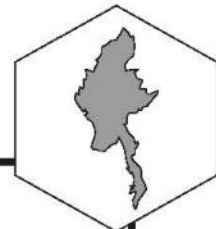
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Mystical Myanmar by motorcycle

Living in South Africa offers many advantages for an adventure motorcyclist, but sometimes one craves something completely different. Myanmar in Southeast Asia is definitely different, says **Johan de Villiers** from Melkbosstrand.





Johan de Villiers and his wife Kim Rew-De Villiers are seasoned motorcyclists with numerous off-road races under their belts. They have toured through several African countries including Botswana, Zambia, Namibia, Tanzania and Rwanda, and were in search of something unusual.

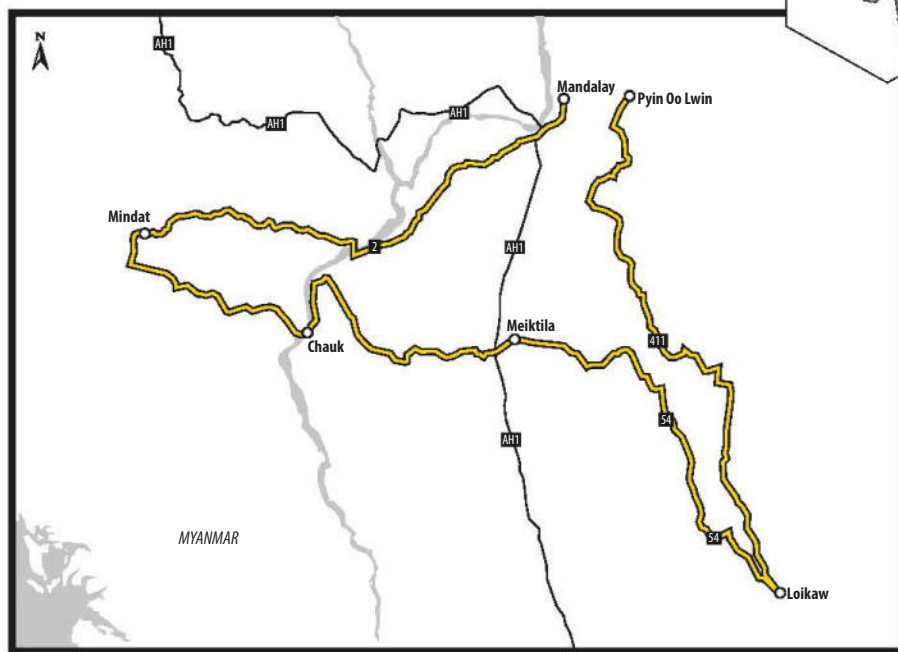
Familiar with Cambodia, Indonesia, and Nepal, Myanmar (formerly Burma) seemed like a great adventure motorcycling destination.

They set off from Mandalay and followed a route that took them across the Irrawaddy River to Mindat. From there, they rode through the Nat Ma Taung National Park to Chauk, followed by Bagan, Meiktila, Kalaw, and then to Loikaw.

They then headed back north again, finishing their epic motorcycle journey 21 days and nearly 2 500 km later in Pyin Oo Lwin near Mandalay. Johan and Kim share their photos and advice if you ever want to embark on a similar motorcycling adventure. Over to Johan...

It is nearly impossible to get good English maps for Myanmar – and even more difficult in the remote mountainous regions in the west of the country. The road signs are in Burmese without any English translation. We arranged a local guide, but he disappeared like mist before the sun when we landed in Mandalay.

Our only solution was to purchase a data SIM for our phones, which were attached to our rented Honda 250 cc motorcycles, and we relied entirely on Google Maps for the whole expedition.



Even in the thickest jungle, we had strong 4G reception.

As for accommodation, we did extensive research beforehand on clean and safe B&Bs recommended by other travellers. It's advisable to thoroughly study Google's map of Myanmar beforehand and familiarise yourself with the general topography of the country.

The landscape, weather conditions and nature vary significantly from region to region. Keep in mind that Myanmar has three main seasons.

The hottest period is from February to May, when there is little or no rain, and temperatures can rise above 40 °C. The rainy season usually runs from May to





October. The best time to travel through Myanmar is from late October to early February, as the worst of the rain is over and it's not too hot.

The roads can be rough, and you need to know what you're doing if you want to tour on a motorcycle. We actually wanted to rent middleweight bikes (690-800 cc) but it was almost impossible – and larger motorcycles are virtually out of the question. The most common type of motorcycles in Myanmar are Chinese 125 cc scooters.

In hindsight, you don't really need a guide for Myanmar. The people,

especially in the countryside, go out of their way to help you. Kim was especially adored, particularly when she took off her helmet, as for many locals it was the first time seeing a blonde-haired woman in their lives!

Regarding health and vaccinations, keep in mind that Myanmar is a third-world country. Keep self-care high on your priority list. Wet wipes are worth their weight in gold when there's no hot shower available for days.

It's also fine to ask local villagers for a bucket of clean river water. Just make sure you have vaccinations for hepatitis A





& B, tetanus, typhoid, and yellow fever.

Good antimalarial drugs are also highly recommended. We packed a small first aid kit that included broad-spectrum antibiotics and rehydration tablets, as pharmacies in rural areas are scarce.

Remote villages don't have bed-and-breakfast accommodation, so you need to introduce yourself to the local headman and ask if someone might have an empty room. There was always room for us, and you usually pay a very low rate – and sometimes you get a plate of food as well.

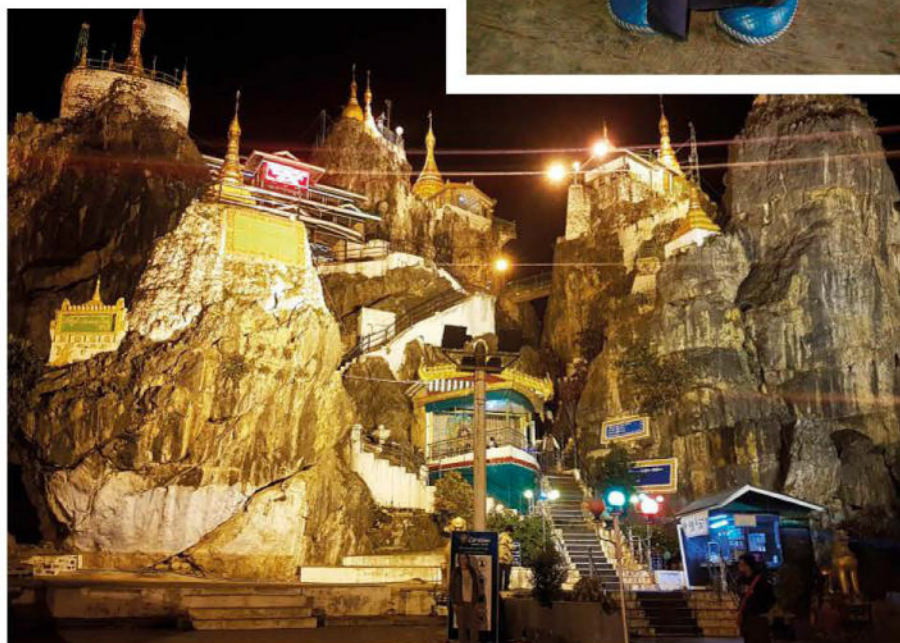
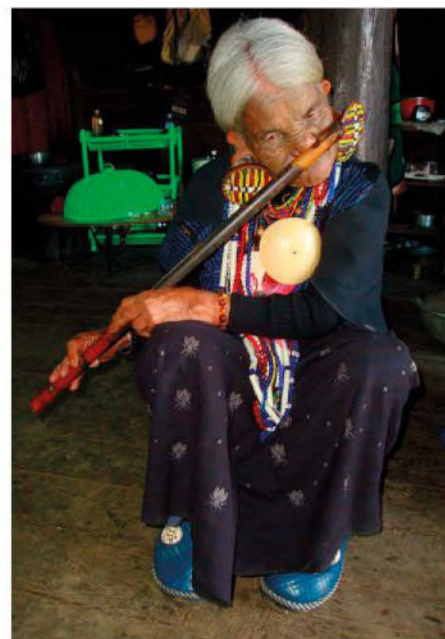
Definitely set aside time to visit Inle Lake, one of the largest in Asia. The fishermen on the lake practice a peculiar method of rowing that involves wrapping one leg around the oar while balancing on the other leg on the stern of the rowboat.

On any expedition, especially with adventure bikes, weight is of utmost importance. The lighter you can travel, the better. With a large GS, you can carry around 40 kg of gear, but on the small Hondas, we had to manage with just 18 kg – and that was a month's worth of clothes and gear.

The rental company assured us the motorcycles were relatively new and recently serviced. We therefore decided to limit our tools to the bare basics.

Since locals everywhere ride scooters, we knew every village would have a mechanic to help us. You actually only need to be able to fix a puncture, that's all. Oh, and avoid the dirty fuel sold on the side of the road.

South Africans have no problems to get visas for Myanmar. Book your plane



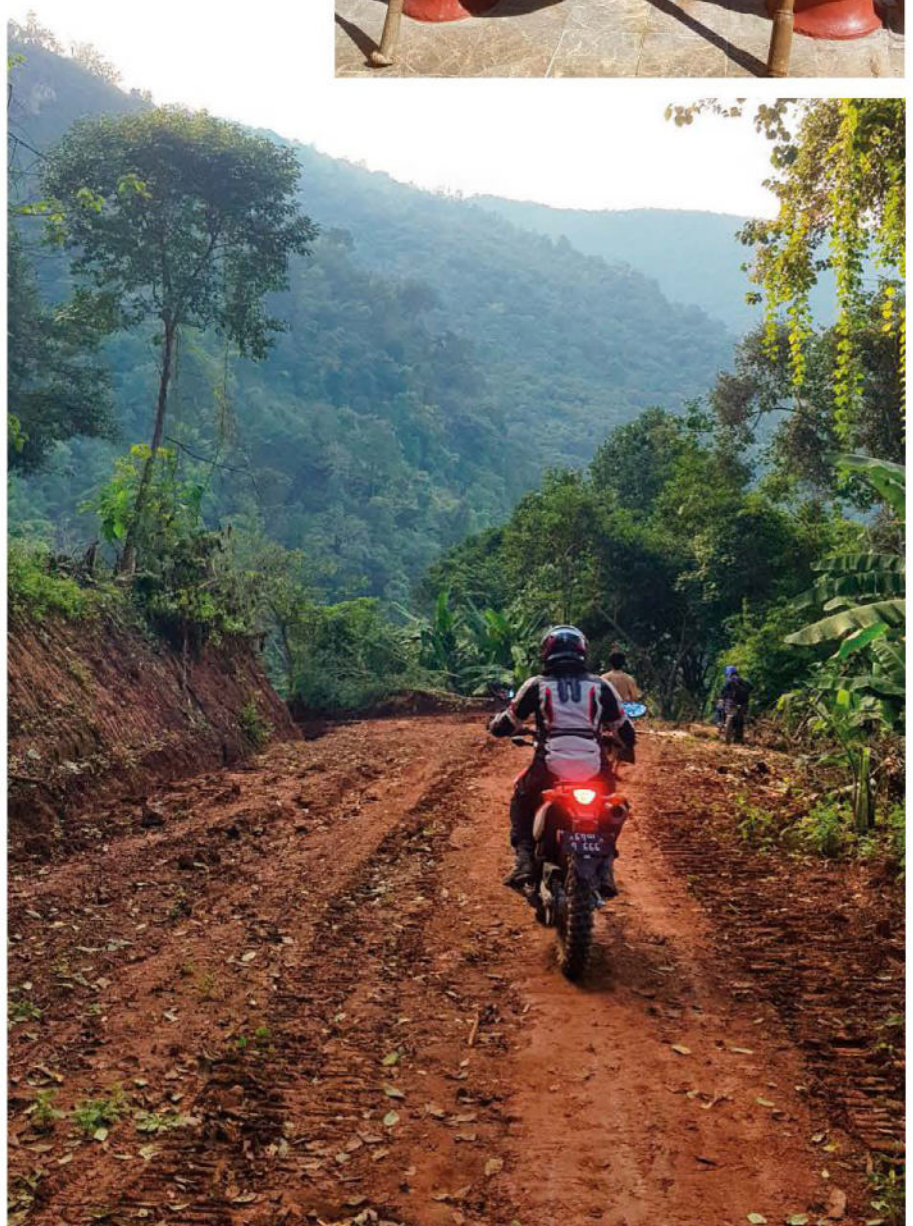
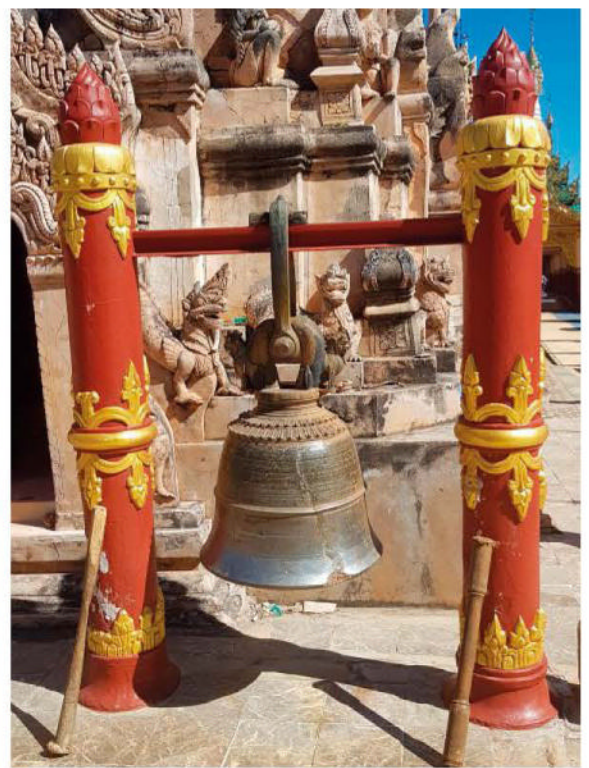


tickets to Bangkok, Thailand – once you're there, you can take a cheap regional flight to Mandalay. Upload copies of your travel documentation and vaccination certificates to a digital cloud like Microsoft One Drive or Dropbox so you can request new ones at the South African consulate in Bangkok. Credit cards are only accepted in major cities; therefore, make sure you have enough local currency, the kyat, to pay for food and fuel.

One of the highlights of this route is the golden temples of Bagan which reminded us of the magnificent pagodas of Angkor Wat in Cambodia. It should definitely be on any adventurer's bucket list.

While you enjoy riding on the winding mountain passes in Myanmar, don't forget to try the exotic food, and keep in





mind that everything from fuel to mobile data is significantly cheaper than in South Africa.

Lastly, I would say that Myanmar's culture and natural splendour deserve a four out of five on a scale of beauty. The majestic rainforests, winding mountain roads, and beautiful freshwater lakes, people and architecture are unique.

The only downside is that traffic in urban areas is insane. It doesn't really get better in rural areas either, as few people adhere to traffic rules.

You need to be vigilant at all times. But overall, we would highly recommend a bike trip through Myanmar.



Restful Ruah



The Ruah campsite near De Doorns is the perfect spot when you want to forget about modern life for a while, sit back and breathe, **Gareth and Tamsyn Rosslee** from Cape Town tells us more about it.



Contact

082 774 4216

christofp@breede.co.za

facebook.com/RuahCamping/

GPS S33.466411 E19.6280756

“ We try to camp at least every two months and have a list of camping sites within a three-hour drive from home. So, it doesn't take much to convince us to load our Howling Moon tent into the Renault Duster and hit the road for a weekend. We were recently at Ruah for the first time and enjoyed it so much that we're planning to return soon.

WHERE DID YOU HEAR ABOUT RUAH?

We started noticing that Ruah was being mentioned increasingly in camping communities on social media. The feedback from almost everyone was that it's a lovely place that comes highly recommended. This convinced us to go there for a weekend.

DID RUAH MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

Yes, absolutely. We enjoy campsites where you can camp on grass under shade trees, where the atmosphere is calm, where you enjoy a good degree of privacy, and where there's a swimming spot nearby. At Ruah, we experienced exactly that, and we could fully relax and unwind when we settled in one of the six demarcated sites. There are also hiking trails, rock art to explore, and rock pools where you can cool off. And of course, there's nothing quite like lighting a fire in the evening and socialising while enjoying the night sounds.



WIN

Gareth and Tamsyn win a Camp Cover Camera bag worth R400.

Check out the superb range of protective covers on their website:

campcover.co.za

CAMP COVER



WHAT ABOUT THE ABLUTION FACILITIES?

You have your own private bathroom, although all six stands share the same building. We like having private facilities because then you can lock your toiletries in there while you camp, and you don't have to walk back and forth with them. The bathrooms are neat and clean, and we found nothing wrong.

IS THERE A SHOP?

No, but the resort does sell wood. Just chat with them when you check in because it's the one thing you do not want to run out of when camping. If you do forget something important, the nearest store is just a 10-minute drive, so you're covered.





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My fourth child

It's gone from a tour bakkie to a farm bakkie... and later a student bakkie. **Wessel Papenfus** from Ventersdorp says he wouldn't trade his 2003 Land Rover Defender 130 TD5 for anything on earth.



Wessel had owned a Land Rover Defender 300 TDi for many years, but that changed 12 years ago when he spotted the bakkie he had been searching for so long at a shopping centre in Rustenburg. Look, you don't easily find a Defender 130 TD5, and Wessel decided on the spot to ask the owner if he might want to sell his bakkie. Of course, the owner had no desire to part with his bakkie, but that's where the story begins, Wessel says, because he made the man an offer anyway.

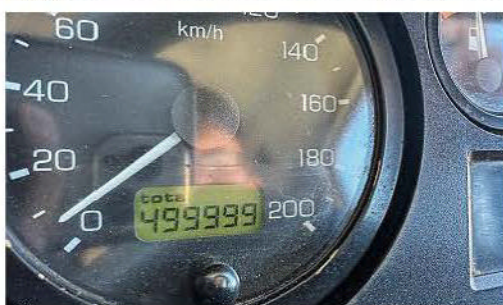
“At the time, I'd been looking for a double-cab bakkie for a while, although I knew the 130 Defender model wouldn't be easy to find. I managed with my 1998 Defender TDi 300, but it was a single cab and not always ideal for everything I wanted to do. Sometimes I had to assess hail damage on farmers' properties, which meant I'd need to drive over rough terrain and even go into the fields. I needed to take equipment like my laptop along and for that I could do with a back seat; a convenience I did not have with the 300 TDi.



Exactly a year later, in 2013, I got a call from the Landie owner I'd met in the parking lot. He was about to emigrate and wanted to know if I was still interested in the Defender. I immediately hopped in the car and hit the road to Skeerpoort to see if it was still the same bakkie. I took the Defender, with

120 000 km on the clock, for a test drive right there and then, and decided I had to have it. The owner wanted R130 000, and two days later the bakkie was at my house – including a canopy and a rooftop tent that were part of the deal.

Besides my work assessing, I also toured and farmed, and I immediately



THAT MOMENT WHEN... Few people get the opportunity to plan a car's 500 000 km milestone ahead of time and to make a special occasion out of it. Wessel Papenfus had that opportunity.



“

Besides my work assessing, I also toured and farmed, and I immediately put my 'new' Defender to work

”







What about your wheels?

Send us an email at drivecamp@gomag.co.za and tell us about your ride.

LOOK EAST. The Eastern Free State is one of the most beautiful parts of our country. A Landie with 500 000 km on the odo became a part of something special.



put my 'new' Defender to work. Anything from extinguishing veld fires to pulling lorries and tractors out of the mud – and checking on the cattle every day. I've even hitched a 10-tonne trailer full of maize to get it closer to the transport vehicle, without any problems.

When I bought the Defender TD5, Hein, my eldest, was just starting university, and his younger brother and sister, Ruald and Miné, were still in school. As the children grew up, they would borrow the Defender from time to time, and it had to temporarily trade its farm existence for student life. Hein says he and Ruald used to pick up girls at university with the Defender to impress them. Then they'd go to the armoured vehicle track at a military base to show what the Defender could do. And when the guys wanted to go fishing, their friends practically fought for a spot to ride along. Of course, there were also the kids' parking tickets because they parked on the sidewalks...

The Defender has never given me a day's trouble, and I've driven it across the country: Botswana, Lesotho,

the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, Mozambique, the West Coast, and a snow-covered Sani Pass. Name it and we've been there.

As I'm a qualified mechanic, I service the vehicle myself, and it has never left me stranded on the side of the road, let alone stuck anywhere. The Defender had a small oil leak way back, but not anymore. Hein and I went to watch the Roof of Africa rally in Lesotho one year, and it was pouring with rain. The dirt road passes were incredibly slippery, and we slid our way through. But that didn't stop us from helping others – we even towed someone's off-road trailer so they could continue in the slippery mess. The Defender doesn't kill us with its fuel consumption either. At 110 km/h on a long trip, I get 10-11 l/100 km.

The other day, Hein again borrowed the Defender to go fishing with friends and noticed the odometer was almost at 500 000 km. I didn't think much of it, but Hein said we should do something special for such a significant milestone. The Landie is, after all, like a fourth child in the house – part of the family.

The idea was to celebrate the moment

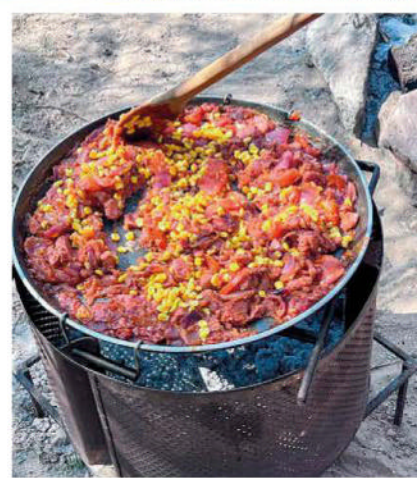
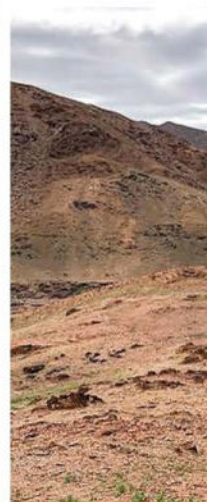
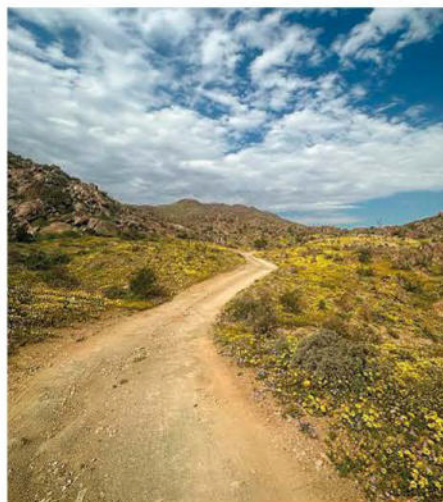
when the odometer turned over to 500 000 km in Lesotho, but one of the kids' passports wouldn't be ready in time. So, we decided on the Golden Gate Highlands National Park for the occasion, about 400 km from Ventersdorp.

We had a banner made for the Defender with the words 'Defender 500 000 km Victory Lap' on it, plus a cap for each of us with the same words on the front and each one's name on the back. So, seven spectators would witness the big moment: my wife Renette and I; Hein and his wife Anchenique; Ruald and his wife Simoné; and our youngest Miné. We were inside the reserve for the special moment.

We kept a close watch on the meter: 499 997 km, 499 998 km, 499 999 km... and with a big cheer from all of us and the honking of the horn, the meter turned over to the big half-million mark – that at a modest 20 km/h while everyone took photos and videos.

Would I ever sell the Defender? That would only happen if we didn't have food on the table. The Defender is very dear to my heart, and I want no other bakkie.





5 guys celebrate Women's Day

How do you and five friends treat your significant others on Women's Day? You give them peace and quiet by leaving them alone while the men head off to Richtersveld in a convoy for a few days, says **Willie Jordaan** from the Strand.

The idea was for the group of close Western Cape friends to travel alone once again, and it just so happened to coincide with Women's Day.

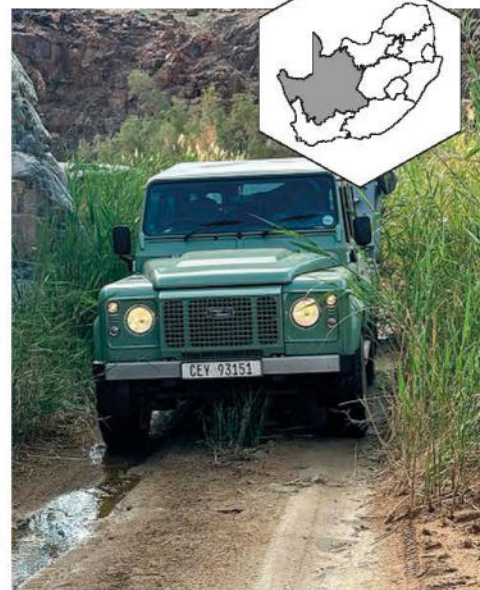
The men jokingly remarked that their absence – and the resulting peace and quiet at home – would be a delightful gift for the women. Fortunately, the women agreed and had no issue with the trip

the men had planned. The guys often socialise and camp together ever since they met at the Strand's squash club.

A few of them had also ventured to Richtersveld three years ago and had all returned in one piece. With their partners' blessing, Willie thus began planning the trip with Wilhelm Richard, Hein Jonker, Etienne du Toit, Frikkie Veldsman, and Vincent Hattingh.

Willie tells us more about this epic trip.

“ We decided to travel in pairs in a convoy of three cars: Wilhelm and me in my Land Rover Defender 110 with a Bush Lapa Beetle hitched; Hein and Vincent in a Defender 90; and Etienne and Frikkie in a 79-series Toyota Land Cruiser with a Venter trailer following. We started planning our trip



– and of course, the menu. The more we planned, the more excited we got, and could barely wait to hit the road to Richtersveld.

Finally, the morning of 9 August arrived, and around 08:00, we set off from the Strand. Hein and Vincent would join us later that day. We made good progress, and somewhere between Citrusdal and Clanwilliam, we stopped for a late breakfast.

It soon became apparent that each of

us had packed enough food for six, and we laid out a veritable feast: from biltong and cheese sandwiches to meatballs and boiled eggs. And, of course, a flask of delicious coffee.

We were delighted by the floral splendour along our route, especially around Vanrhynsdorp and Bitterfontein. It looked like a fairy-tale world with enchanting layers of colour.

Indeed, all the fields were cheerful. As we drove, we told each other that this

floral experience alone made the trip worthwhile.

Just before 16:00, we reached Okiep,



where we would spend the first night at the town's hotel.

The Okiep Hotel is one of the Northern Cape's true gems, with the friendliest staff and most delicious food.

This is also where Hein and the others caught up with us, and as is typical on the first night of an adventure, we dined and socialised over a few glasses of wine.



The next morning, we were up early and headed towards De Hoop in the Richtersveld. But first, we made a quick stop in Port Nolloth for a few last-minute purchases. Frikkie also needed to visit the pharmacy, as he was suffering from something between vertigo and an ear infection. *(I suspect I know what Frikkie was dealing with, especially after a lively evening at the Okiep Hotel, but I'm not a doctor and should rather keep quiet. – Ed)*

Thankfully, the pharmacist in town provided him with medication, and he soon felt better.

From Port Nolloth, we continued to Alexander Bay to refuel. About 80 km lay ahead to Sendelingsdrif, but just outside Alexander Bay, we encountered 25 km of the roughest corrugated road we had ever experienced. It shook us to our core, but fortunately, the road eventually improved.

From Sendelingsdrif, it was 46 km to De Hoop. This route was food for the soul; all around us, the Richtersveld was adorned in yellow and green with patches of white. It was a feast for the eyes, and for most of the journey, we drove in low gear. It took us about 2½ hours to cover the 46 km.

The Akkedis Pass was beautiful, with a few challenging sections where we had to drive very slowly, but it

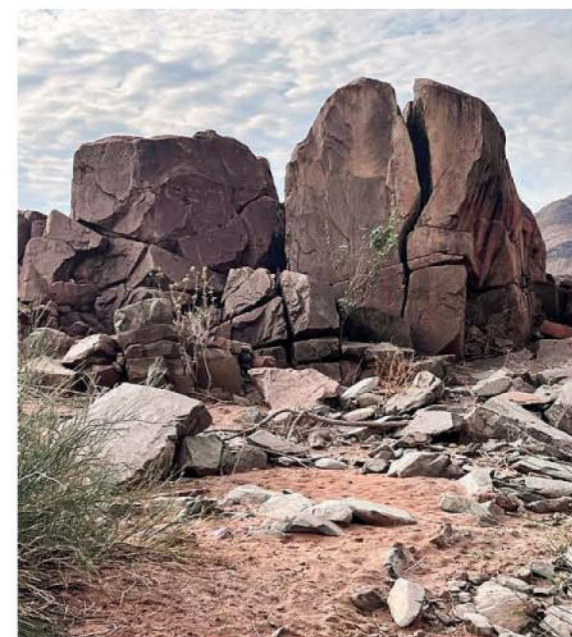
gave us absolutely no problems.

About 3 km before De Hoop, there was also an interesting stretch of road where we had to drive down a slope through water and reeds. Then, suddenly, we were there, surrounded by stunning natural





CHEERS! Willie, Hein, Vincent, Etienne, Frikkie and Wilhelm enjoy a drink surrounded by the beauty of the Richtersveld.



beauty and right on the Orange River.

We set up camp under a canopy of large trees and built our braai area with a magnificent view of the river. Etienne had initially tried to set up his camp right where our view was, but we soon persuaded him otherwise.

There were quite a few other campers, but we quickly saw they were here for the same reason as us: to enjoy nature and the Orange River. It wasn't long before the vervet monkeys showed

up – a gang of mischief-makers who would snatch anything edible, even a bar of soap. You learn quickly to keep all delicacies securely stashed away.

By early evening, the campfire was blazing, and the socialising and cooking began. It was delightful here, and we enjoyed three days of great company and food, filled with camping tales and laughter.

It was a place where we could recharge and strengthen already strong bonds of friendship.

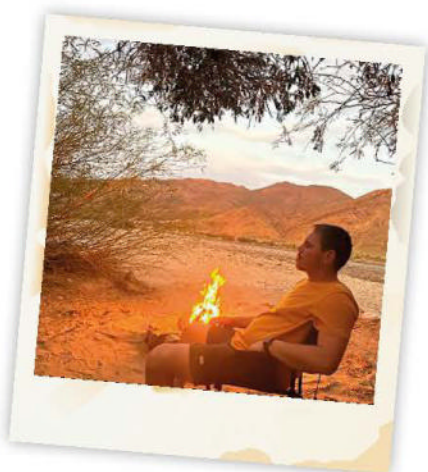
We had a great time. We walked along the river, swam, and simply enjoyed escaping the hustle and bustle of work. The three days flew by all too quickly, and before we knew it, it was Sunday

morning, and we had to pack up camp and brave the return journey.

We retraced our route, again amazed by the beauty of the flowers in the Richtersveld. We knew the corrugated road lay ahead, but we would travel it again and again for the wonderful getaway.

We stayed overnight at the Okiep Hotel again and headed home the next morning. On the way back, Wilhelm and I were silent for long periods, lost in memories of the beauty we had seen and experienced. I'm sure the women enjoyed a wonderful Women's Day.

Because we certainly did. And we'll do it again!



Willie wins a Camp Cover Bundu bag worth R400. This multipurpose bag is suitable as a comprehensive medical kit or a general carryall bag. Visit Camp Cover's website at campcover.co.za for more innovative and durable camping solutions.



WIN

Full throttle ahead



The Stellantis group is set to introduce six new vehicles this year – we took some of the newcomers for a spin, but also revisited a few familiar faces.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

For this issue, we're deviating from the usual driving impression format because we tested multiple vehicles on one occasion. This also serves as a peek behind the scenes at what often happens at vehicle launches.

But let's start at the beginning: Who is Stellantis? This multinational company was founded in 2021 when the Italian-American company Fiat Chrysler Automobiles merged with the French PSA group – comprising mainly Peugeot, Citroën and Opel.

Based in Amsterdam, Stellantis is the world's fourth-largest vehicle manufacturer after Toyota, Volkswagen and Hyundai, with 14 brands under its wing. Available locally are Alfa Romeo, Citroën, DS (a variant of Citroën), Fiat, Abarth (a variant of Fiat) Jeep, Maserati, Opel and Peugeot. Then there are also Lancia, Ram, Dodge, Chrysler and Vauxhall, which are not available locally.

At least 40 motoring journalists were

invited to a gathering at the Gerotek testing facilities outside Pretoria. Journos from Gauteng had to arrive early in the morning on their own, while motoring scribes from elsewhere – in our case, Cape Town – were flown in and shuttled by minibus.

Each of us received a blue Stellantis cap as a gift before four shiny new vehicles were unveiled: a fully electric Abarth (really just a souped-up Fiat 500), the new Opel Corsa, the new Jeep Wrangler, and a single-cab Peugeot Landtrek intended for commercial use. The two vehicles not shown at this event were the new Citroën C3 Aircross and the plug-in electric Fiat 500.

After the glamorous event – and a bite to eat – we were taken to Gerotek's 4x4 course where we tested a Jeep Wrangler, a Jeep Cherokee and a Peugeot Landtrek. In the past, Ratels and Mambas had to drive through these holes, and the Jeeps had no trouble at all.

There are those who claim that a bakkie is the best four-wheel drive, but on Gerotek's 4x4 track, it seemed that the breakover and departure angles of the bakkies could not compete with those of SUVs. We will admit, however, that in terms of load capacity and practical considerations, a bakkie does make sense for overland travel.

After the 4x4 action, we were taken to a wet skid pan where we participated in timed races. Each driver had to get behind the wheel of a new Citroën C3, take off without spinning the wheels (10 seconds added to your time if this happened) and swerve through a cone slalom – for each cone you hit (or skid into), you were penalised by 5 seconds. And then you had to brake hard to stop within a given space. If you made a mistake here, another 10 seconds were added to your time.

Among the competitive motoring journalists, the fastest time was 47 s and the



WOTALOTIGOT.
We know of no other company that has as many vehicle brands in its stable. And each brand has a unique flavour to it.



slowest just under 2 minutes. We're not going to reveal which publication's journo drove so slowly, but it wasn't us...

The next test took place on Gerotek's dynamic handling test track. Here, each journalist were given their own vehicle once more. These ranged from an Alfa Romeo Tonale Veloce (the car everyone rushed towards); three Opels: the Mokka, Grandland and Vivaro delivery van; and four Peugeots: the 2008, 3008, Landtrek (single and double cab) and a Partner delivery van.

Here too, the journalists competed as they raced around the track. After each round, vehicles were swapped so everyone had a turn to test everything. However, some drivers' egos got the better of them – or

perhaps their talent ran out – because one vehicle lost its way and drove into the bushes; another was so enthusiastically pushed through the turns that a tyre came off its rim. Fortunately, no one was hurt and the damage to the vehicles was minor. Some egos were a tad bruised...

The Peugeot Landtrek single cab was the vehicle that scared us the most. The bakkie's stiff rear springs and empty load bed were a handful on the track, though a commercial bakkie really doesn't belong on a racetrack. The Alfa Romeo Tonale, as expected, handled the best, but it was the Opel Mokka that made most journalists – including us – smile from ear to ear. This little car is loads of fun through sharp turns and its

acceleration is lightning fast.

The day concluded with a prizegiving, one last media session followed by a late lunch before we headed home.

Following allegations in the comment section on News24, we feel we must affirm that motor journalists are not paid to attend launches – other than their regular salaries. The only compensation is a meal, often a cap, always a delightful day behind the wheel of the latest vehicles, and an economy class plane ticket home – not that we're complaining!

Prices for the Opel Corsa, Citroën C3 Aircross, extended Peugeot Landtrek range, new Jeep Wrangler, electric Fiat 500, and Abarth will be announced later.

Mr Modesty

Time is an important measure to determine whether a model is successful or not. Isuzu's mu-X stands on the right side of that line.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**



ISUZU MU-X 3.0 ONYX 4x4

Five years ago, when we first reviewed the mu-X, you could only choose from two models: a 4x2 and a 4x4, both equipped with the same 3 l engine and automatic transmission. Today, you can choose between six models, now also including a stronger 3 l or a new 1,9 l engine. It's clear the mu-X has firmly established itself in the market, and it's time to see how the latest model performs in front of a caravan.

Six of the best

The price range of the six models varies from R722 200 to R970 300, but notably, even the entry-level model

features two electrically adjustable front seats – a rarity in many manufacturers' base models. The entire mu-X range boasts seven seats, a rear diff lock, and an automatic six-speed transmission. Interesting because both engine sizes share the same gear ratios.

In terms of torque, the 1,9 l engine in the 4x2 model is just slightly behind the previous 3 l (350 Nm instead of 380 Nm), while the new 3 l engine flexes a robust 450 Nm. Three of the five models are four-wheel drive.

The top model is the Onyx, also our test vehicle, distinguished by several luxuries. The most obvious are its 20-inch wheels compared to the others' 18-inch;

an extra airbag; a front camera that aids with features such as lane assist, and an imminent collision warning. The Onyx also boasts other extras, such as automatic high beams, heated front seats, and a 220 V socket in the cabin. Its power steering is electric, unlike the others, which have hydraulic steering.

For all these positives, there's a minor downside: the Onyx is the heaviest with a tare weight of 2 125 kg – 35 kg heavier than the sibling just below it. The issue is that all models have a gross vehicle mass (GVM) of 2 700 kg or 2 800 kg, meaning the Onyx has the smallest load capacity of the lot: 614 kg. The rest range from 644 kg to 739 kg for the 1,9 l.



Towing numbers

The old 3 ℓ model had a towing capacity of 3 000 kg, but this has been boosted to 3 500 kg for the new 3 ℓ (2 100 kg for the 1,9 ℓ). On paper, this doesn't affect people who tow as much, since most caravans on the market have a GVM of 1 800 kg or less. As we've said before, this figure is more an indication of the vehicle's capability and doesn't correlate with the weights allowed on a public road by legislation.

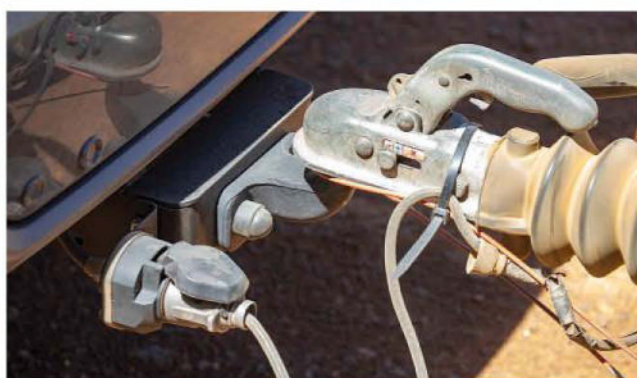
Your vehicle's tare weight determines the towing weight, and your caravan's GVM must not exceed this weight. Thus, even the 1,9 ℓ is hefty enough to tow most caravans on the market.

The towbar is roughly the same shape as the old model's. It's also from Brink Towing Systems, but the weight limits look different: the maximum towing load of 2 965 kg has been boosted to 3 500 kg, and the nose weight is now 120 kg – 10 kg more. (Isuzu's limit for nose weight is 350 kg.) The socket where you plug in the caravan's lights has rubber inside the edge to ensure a tight fit of the light plug. It's a good way to keep out dust and water.

The rear camera also differs from the older model's. The old model's have static index lines that don't have a curve animation when you turn the steering wheel, while the new models show both static and animated lines, which you can activate or deactivate as you wish.

A significant improvement is that the computer now knows when you insert the light plug into the harness. Previously, you had to live with the reverse sensor alarm screaming because the computer thought you were going to crash into the caravan, while it was actually hitched. As soon as you now plug in the trailer's wire, a warning light appears on the dashboard indicating the blind spot sensors are deactivated, and there's no alarm when you reverse. Even though the blind spot sensors are turned off while you're towing, other functions such as lane control still work.

A slight step back is the position of the ball on the rear-view screen. Previously, it was in the middle, making it easy to back up right to the coupler. Now it lies on the right third line, and it's not as easy to simply use the screen for reversing. The lens of the camera is 24 cm left of the ball's centre point. Fortunately, the larger 19 cm screen compensates somewhat for this.



NICE TOUCH. The computer knows when you hook the caravan's electrical system up to your car, and so the reverse sensor alarm won't go bananas when it detects a large object behind you. We also appreciate that the connector is weather sealed.



Drive and Camp says

According to the mu-X manual, you should not use cruise control when towing, nor exceed 90 km/h on a level, straight, and dry road.

**Fuel matters**

According to our calculations, the fuel consumption for the towing test was 15,2 l/100 km over a distance of 125,2 km (the computer's figure was 13,3 l/100 km). The old 3 l gave us 12,7 l/100 km, but it must be said that the caravan then was a quarter lighter. It was a Jurgens Xplorer (980 kg) and this test was with a Bush Lapa Baobab weighing 1 340 kg.

Another plus is that the fuel tank has been enlarged from 65 l to 80 l. Previously, the range with that particular caravan was 514 km, while with the latest towing combination, we could travel 528 km. Our total driving time was 3 hours and 10 minutes, but that included stopping to take photos. According to the computer, the actual driving time was 2 hours and 54 minutes, and the average speed 43 km/h.

Here's what Pieter Crous, our towing expert, says:

“Judging by how softly the mu-X rides, you'd expect considerable body roll. The ride is extremely comfortable, and when you tow and sway the steering back and forth, there's a slight sway, but no significant body roll. That's just how the mu-X's suspension reacts – I call it spongy.”

The ride is just as comfortable on a dirt road, and you don't hear any loose items that might annoy you.

The dashboard is easy to read, and I like the layout. There are paddle shifters behind the steering wheel, but as you get up to towing speed, the power delivery feels sluggish. Yet, the engine delivers 450 Nm, which



is entirely adequate. In fact, it pulls quite well uphill and the automatic transmission is buttery smooth.

Where I did experience sluggishness is when you floor the pedal to engage a lower gear – it takes several moments.

As mentioned, lane assist remains active while you're towing. The steering becomes stiff if you get too close to lane markings, but if you use your

indicators, the computer knows that's what you intend to do.

The turning circle of 11,4 m feels a bit wide, but hey, it is a 4x4.

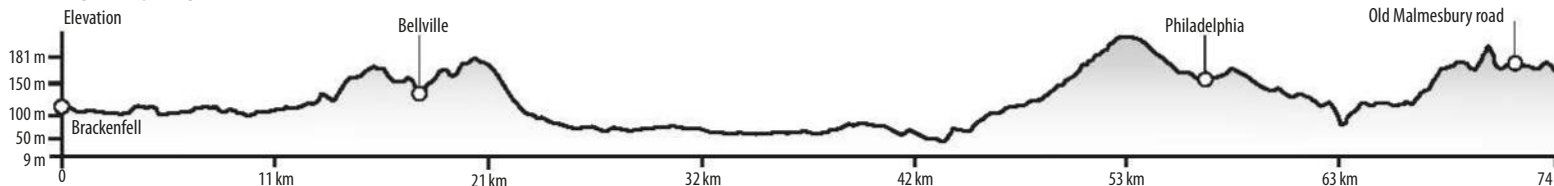
The electric parking brake caught me off guard: when it's engaged and you press the accelerator to move off, the brake does not automatically disengage – unless your seatbelt is clicked in.

I would have expected a navigation system. All the different buttons for the air-con confused me – they don't seem clearly marked. I prefer one dial to access all the settings.

The price of just under a million sounds high, but compared to its competitors, it's not unusual.

Ultimately, I'm impressed with the mu-X. I think it's a good towing vehicle.”

Distance 125,2 km. Road Highways, back roads, gravel roads and built-up areas.
Total towing time 3 hours and 10 minutes. Weather 23 °C, sunny with a north wind of 21 km/h.

TOWING PROFILE



What we towed

Make Bush Lapa

Model Baobab

Year model 2016

GVM 1 800 kg

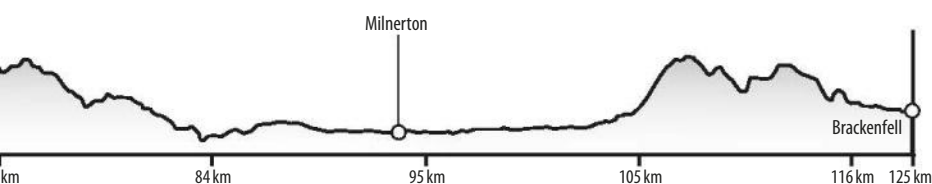
Loaded weight on the axle during test 1 340 kg

Drive & Camp loaned the Bush Lapa Baobab from Kubu 4x4 Trailer Rental. They have branches in Krugersdorp, Brackenfell, Potchefstroom, Bethlehem, and Ballito, and you can choose from a variety of bush trailers and caravans.

📍 kubu4x4.co.za 📧 jannie@kubu4x4.co.za

SPECIFICATIONS

Model	3.0 Onyx 4x4
Engine	four-cylinder turbodiesel
Power	140 kW @ 3 600 rpm
Torque	450 Nm @ 1 600-2 600 rpm
Transmission	Six-speed automatic
Drive	Two-wheel or 4x4 with rear diff lock
Tank	80 ℓ
Fuel consumption with caravan	15,2 ℓ/100 km (6,6 km/ℓ)
Range with caravan	528 km
Tare weight	2 125 kg
Test weight (including nose weight of trailer)	2 360 kg
GVM	2 800 kg
GCM	5 900 kg
Combination mass during test	3 700 kg
Towing capacity	3 500 kg
Tow bar rating	3 500 kg
Max vertical weight of towbar	120 kg
Is towbar removable?	No
Is there space for a drop plate?	Yes
PRICE	R960 600



From the competitors

Sports utility vehicles, 4x4, diesel, automatic



R974 800

Ford Everest 2.0 XLT

500 Nm

Features a 10-speed transmission, seven seats, and 18-inch wheels.



R961 400

Toyota Fortuner 2.8 VX BT

500 Nm

Features a six-speed transmission, seven seats, and 18-inch wheels.



R904 990

Mitsubishi Pajero Sport 2.4 DI-DC Exceed

430 Nm

Features an eight-speed transmission, seven seats, and 18-inch wheels.

Camp champ

The Overlander is the third in Stealth's series of Cub models. It's not only the latest, it's also the most versatile.

Word and photos **Leon Botha**

Stealth's new Cub Overlander is specifically aimed at those who don't hesitate to venture off the tar road to reach their campsite.

It's a compact caravan designed for a couple, but still boasts ample space inside because the bed folds away entirely to

create a large social area. It also features 15-inch wheels, a geyser and a gas cylinder, a 220 V/12 V power system with a 15 A charger, a 100 Ah lithium battery, and an 8 ℓ/minute water pump.

You're allowed to tow the other Stealth models with a regular driver's license,

but the Overlander's gross vehicle mass (GVM) tips the scales at 1 500 kg, meaning you need a towing license to tow it. Its payload capacity (the difference between the caravan's tare weight and GVM) is a solid 410 kg.

Let's take a closer look.



Find your footing

The Cub Overlander has two fold-down corner steadies at the front and two detachable supports at the back. To properly set up those at the rear, you must first slightly lower the front end.

Clamp both rear steadies in place and then lift the two front ones. (By the way,

the detachable ones are stored in the open nose cone.)

Stealth deserves praise for the clever nose cone. It's simply a flat shelf that runs across the width of the caravan over the A-frame, with two screens on the sides.

A gas cylinder and jerry can fit behind each screen, but the screens can swing away

like a door, giving you direct access. It works brilliantly and is lockable.

The jockey wheel can be detached and fits in the middle of the rack in the nose cone while towing.

The awning is another winner: it swings open across the entire left side and rear end. Between each of the support poles is



STEALTH CUB OVERLANDER



SPECIFICATIONS

Manufacturer	Profibre Products
Model	Cub Overlander
Sleeps (standard)	Two
Dimensions	4,511 x 2,034 x 2,265 m
Wheels	15 inch
Axle	1,8 t
Tare weight	840 kg
Load capacity	660 kg / 260 kg
GVM	1 500 kg / 1 100 kg
Chassis	Galvanised
Hull	Insulated fibreglass
Price	R395 000

Dealer network

The headquarters is in Pinetown. Visit stealthcaravans.co.za for your nearest dealer.

Contact ☎ 031 713 8900 ✉ administration@stealthcaravans.co.za

📍 stealthcaravans.co.za



an anchor rope attached to the roof so you can pull it slightly down to form a gutter. It works excellently – we experienced this first-hand when it rained continuously on the KwaZulu-Natal coast.

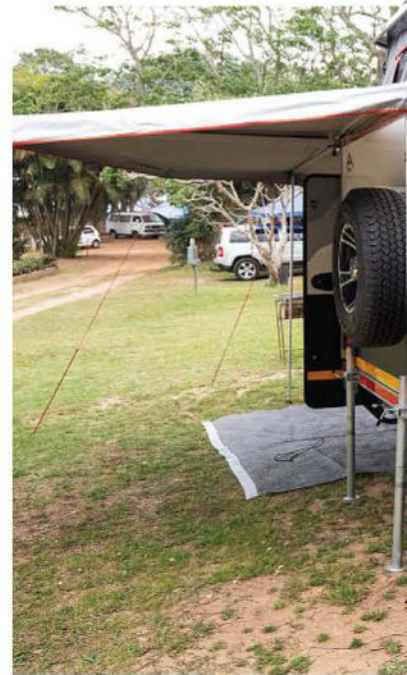
Each anchor rope folds into a small pouch at the seam where it attaches to the roof; thus, there are no ropes hanging around when you fold the roof.

Outdoor kitchen

The kitchen occupies the entire area to the left of the door. A door above the wheel opens so you can access the cupboards (of various sizes). Top left is a double socket (220 V), with the glasses, cups, and plates fitting into sponge cutouts in the opposite cupboard. A loose aluminium surface (99 x 45 cm) hooks under this cupboard to form a worktop – there's space for a foldable sink to the far left. This setup moves to the rear in the new models and you now get a 100 x 30 cm top as option on this side. The tap on its extension is just to the left of the surface at the hull, plus another 220 V socket.

The cupboard door forms a roof over the worktop and there's also a light attached inside. The sliding frame with the gas stove and fridge/freezer pulls out from the hull to the left of the worktop. The gas stove (the cast-iron type) is at the edge of this drawer, but it's folded up and stands on its side – it looks like a small aluminium box. In many caravans, the stove is mounted on the worktop, but here you gain that space. First, a stove panel opens to both sides to provide a windscreen, then the stove itself folds flat between the two screens. You need to move one of the gas cylinders closer and connect it.

While you're outside, you can set up the



shower tent (optional). The gas geyser's storage is on the inside of the entry door in the prototype, but it has moved to the other side, inside the cupboard door. Lift the geyser from its storage and hook it on the hull above the right wheel. The two water pipes are pushed diagonally behind the wheel into their sockets, and you must also move the gas cylinder closer. The cubicle itself is folded

in a bag at the rear end. Open the bag so the arms on which the shower curtain hangs can unfold. The cubicle has a floor with mesh around the edge to let the water drain. The cubicle has room for the tap, which is about hip height behind the lid in the hull, and there's a light above on the hull.

Inside the entry door is a cupboard with foam cutouts for crockery.



Off to bed!

As you stand in the door looking inside, the entire panel on the right is a continuous cupboard with various shelves, with zip-up canvas doors. There's more than enough

storage space for two people's clothing – and even linen. The bottom two cupboards follow the contour of the bodywork and are a good spot for shoes. Opposite the door is another cupboard. Its upper section has

a rail for hangers. For a caravan of this size, the cupboard is huge: 49 cm deep, 86 cm long and 99 cm high.

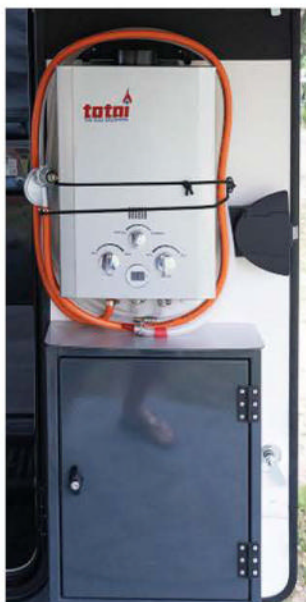
The entire area to the left is the bed – 1,96 x 1,37 cm – basically an extra-length double bed. Above the bed to the left are a few smaller cupboards, but these are omitted in newer models as the kitchen size is adjusted to accommodate a 20 l microwave.

On each side of the bed is an adjustable reading light and a shelf. (The one on the left is wider, and is more than just a shelf; it's also a door that can lock. It's a good place to keep valuable items out of sight if you go somewhere.) There are also USB sockets. On each side of the bed is a window that can open with mesh and a blind.

The bed is hinged at the head end and can thus be lifted up – then there are two benches opposite each other. Two people can sit very comfortably here. A loose table (100 x 50 cm) can also fit in here if you've invited the neighbours for a game of bridge, but the table makes the space between the two benches tight.

There's storage space under the benches.





R395 000 **Stealth Cub Overlander** **GVM 1 500 kg**

Drive & Camp borrowed the Cub Overlander from the manufacturer.

The competition

Small off-road caravans for two with an inside bed and fixed panels



R329 500 **UniPod XPeditionPod XL**

With a GVM of 1 500-2 000 kg and the hull is made of double-insulated aluminium.



Drive & Camp says
Judging by the sales since the prototype, the new Cub Overlander could become a favourite.



From here, you have access to the fridge/freezer if it's pushed back into the hull. The power system's panel is in the door on the left.

Here, you can see, among other things, the voltmeter reading and how much charge the battery has. There are also sockets (including Hella and USB) plus switches for things like the interior and exterior lights, fridge/freezer, pump and geyser.

Add this

Optional extras include a roof-top bed for two more people (R25 000); the loose table (R3 600); shower (R7 000); 270° awning (R25 000) and side panels (R15 000); a canvas covering for the space between the caravan and the ground (R1 100); and the workshop (R1 752).



R370 000 **Infanta Enkulu 1**

GVM 1 900 kg and aluminium hull.



R379 500 **Jaguar Sabor**

GVM 1 600 kg and stainless-steel hull.

Cooking with gas

Your gas stove is as much a part of camping as your braai, here's more on that special partnership between the gas and the stove.

Words and photos **Leon Botha** Illustrations and graphics **Dominic Wienand**



At the campsite, you have several options to cook food or boil water for a cuppa.

The most basic and best, of course, is a campfire, but it takes time to get going and you can't simply make

a fire anywhere you like. A microwave comes in handy, but not all of us take one on holiday and besides, you need 220 V power at your stand. The same applies to an induction plate.

The most common way boiling

water is a gas stove. If your caravan has an outdoor kitchen, it's most likely equipped with one, and if you are camping with a tent, a portable gas stove is almost as much a part of your camping gear as a set of camping chairs.

How it works

Gas – or more specifically LPG, short for liquefied petroleum – is a by-product of oil refining and can also be extracted from natural gas. (Sasol also extracts gas from coal.) According to the 2022 annual report of the South African Fuel Industry Association (Sapia), most of our LPG is imported. Upon enquiry, the Liquefied Petroleum Gas Association of South Africa (LPGSA) confirmed that 80% or more of the LPG consumed locally currently comes from abroad.

Gas consists of hydrocarbon gases with molecules that have three to four carbon atoms. LPG mainly comprises a mixture of propane and butane. According to our national standard for LPG (SANS 1774), a ratio of 50-50 to 90-10 propane and butane is considered LPG, says the LPGSA.

The folks at this association also point out that the ratio between propane and butane affects the vapour pressure. The more propane, the higher the pressure in the cylinder.

A type of organosulfur compound, ethyl mercaptan, is added to the gas mixture for LPG's distinctive smell. One source says it smells like onions, leeks, durian (a tropical fruit in Southeast Asia) or even cooked cabbage.

So, if you can smell the gas, there's a leak somewhere. It is a smell that can be detected in a tiny concentration – as little as 1 part per 2,8 billion parts of air. By the way, natural gas rises in the atmosphere, while LPG is more than one and a half times denser than the air around us. This means LPG will gather on the ground if it leaks. Gas itself is not toxic and does not cause pollution if it escapes.

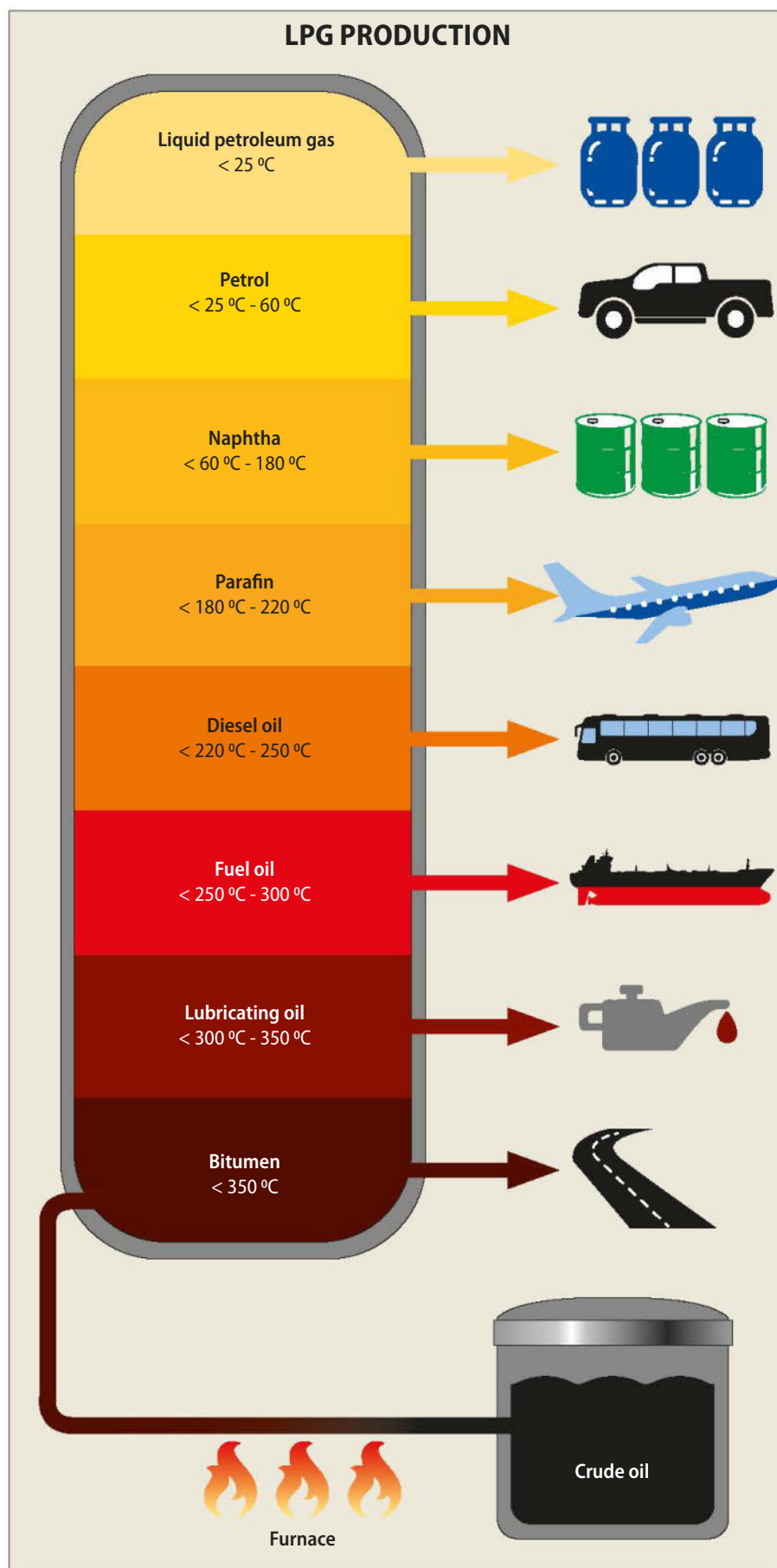
The boiling point of gas is well below room temperature, which means it evaporates at our normal temperatures and air pressure.

Under pressure, it takes the form of

“

So, if you can smell the gas, there's a leak somewhere. It is a smell that can be detected in a tiny concentration

”



a liquid – that's why it feels like there's a watery content when you shake a full cylinder. But when the gas comes out of the cylinder and changes from liquid to gas form, it expands 270 times. This means 1 l of liquid gas is in gas form 270 l.

When a gas cylinder is filled, it is up to 80% full of liquid and the rest is gas vapour.

The pressure in the cylinder changes as the temperature changes. For example, a cylinder with propane gas has a pressure of 6,4 bar* if the temperature of the gas is 16 °C, but at 27 °C it goes up to 8,8 bar, at 32 °C to 10,3 bar, and at 38 °C to 11,9 bar. The maximum pressure a cylinder can withstand is about five times more than the pressure it is typically used for, but this is determined by the manufacturer.

According to [esenssys.com](https://www.esenssys.com), a cylinder is likely to burst at 68,95 bar. According to the LPGSA, 7,5 bar to 10,5 bar is a standard pressure in a cylinder.

The gas regulator between the cylinder and the stove lowers the pressure to 0,0275 bar. There must be a concentration of 2-10% LPG in the air for it to ignite, and the ignition temperature is above 380 °C. The flame is supposed to burn blue, which is also a sign of complete combustion.

An orange or yellow flame means combustion is incomplete. This means unburned carbon and hydrocarbons are

Blazing hot

Gas stoves vary, but for our purposes, we look at the common cast-iron type seen on many caravans. Between the control knob that you turn and the flame that you light at the burner, a few interesting things happen. The so-called Venturi effect – thanks to the clever work of Giovanni Battista Venturi, an Italian physicist of the 19th century – makes the stove work as it should.

After you've turned the control knob, the gas is injected through a needle-point-sized hole – the venturi or jet – into a larger pipe where there's also ordinary air. When the gas moves through the venturi, it accelerates the flow, but it also causes a negative pressure. If you take a closer look at the stove, you'll see the mixing tube – the section between the venturi and the burner – has an opening around the control knob. This is where the air around us – the primary air source – flows into the tube (thanks to the negative pressure inside the tube). Here two important things happen: because the gas is injected through the small opening into the larger volume, it causes, as we have already mentioned, lower air pressure. Air is thus sucked into the pipe, which then results in the air and gas mixing. This mixture ignites when you



Source: [jenikrbyhistorygetarchive.net](https://www.jenikrbyhistorygetarchive.net)

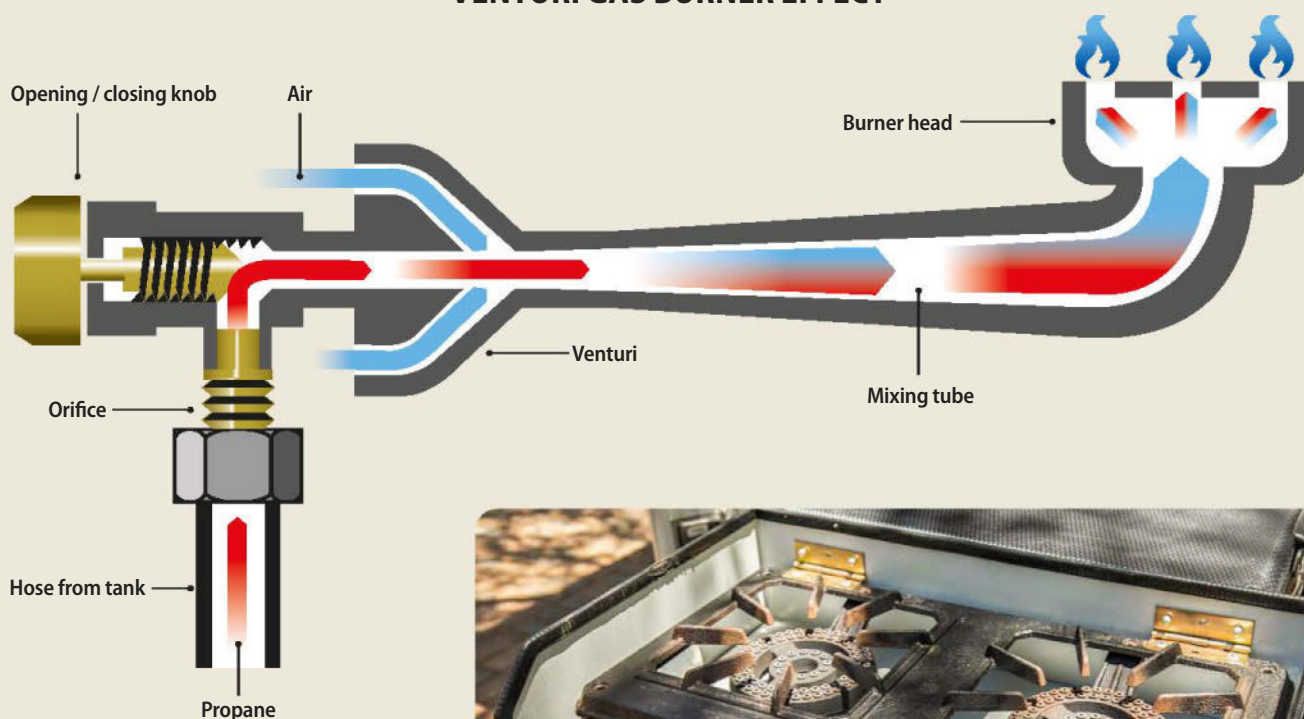
GIOVANNI BATTISTA VENTURI

strike a match at the burner. (The air around the flame is the secondary air source.)

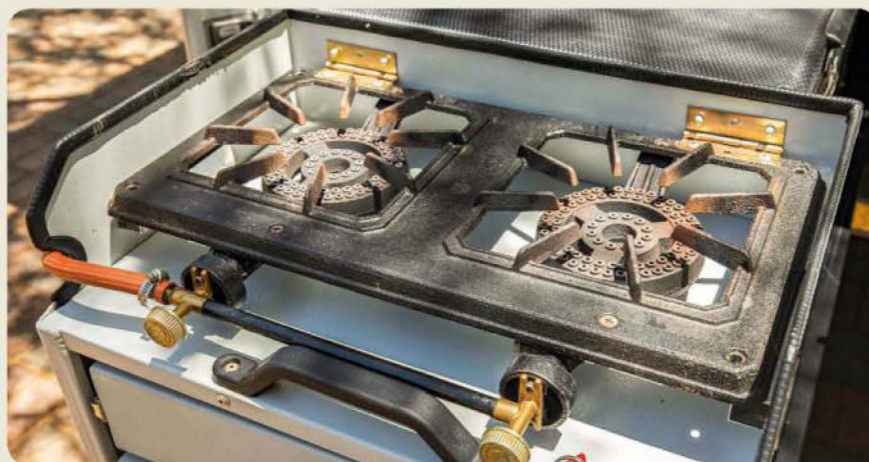
If you have ever worked with this type of gas stove, it has probably happened to you that the flame suddenly ignites behind the control knob (in the mixing tube) and is called a flashback. This causes a strange sound and can give you quite a fright. Relax, nothing is going to explode. Simply immediately turn the knob to cut off the gas supply. If you allow the flame to continue to burn, it can damage the burner. The combustion in this case is also incomplete due to a lack of primary air.



VENTURI GAS BURNER EFFECT



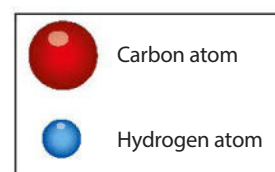
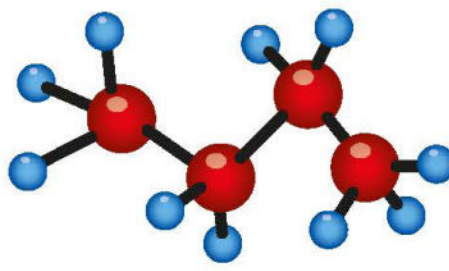
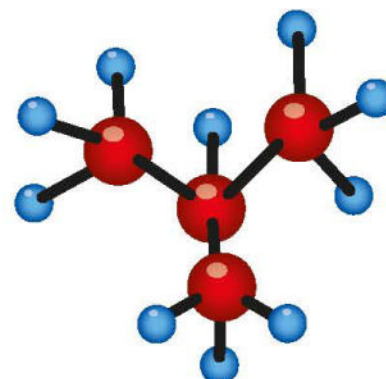
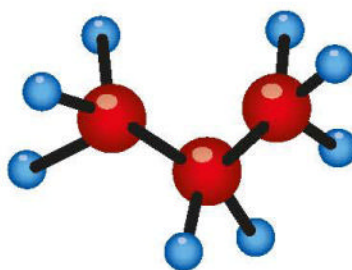
The energy efficiency of an LPG stove is 55-60%, while newer models can be up to 90%. This is much higher than many other stoves: in a gas stove that is 45% efficient, the amount of energy released by 1 kg of LPG is equivalent to 2,5 kg of coal in a coal stove and 21,2 kg of wood burned.



released – long names for soot. A blue flame burns at around 1 980 °C and the yellow flame at 1 000 °C. While the blue flame burns properly, a yellow flame – besides the soot – also emits carbon monoxide, which is harmful to people and can even be deadly. It has no colour, smell, or taste, and if you are, for example, asleep, you are highly exposed. It can cause damage before someone realises there is a problem.

So, use your gas stove for its intended purpose – and outside your caravan or tent. (Never use it to get heat inside the caravan or tent).

LPG GAS CHEMICAL COMPOUNDS





ATTENTION! Gas cylinders should be held securely and stored upright.

Keep an eye on your gas

- The gas cylinder should stand upright – and is the case in caravans – also clamped.
- It is not necessary to turn the valve all the way open; one and a half turns are enough.
- If you smell gas, close the valve. Use water with a bit of dish soap to locate a leak and check also at places like the valve and regulator. You will see bubbles where it leaks.
- If flames arise elsewhere due to the gas, close the valve. Do not try to extinguish the flames with a garden hose; use a fire extinguisher (these are usually near the caravan door).



OL' FAITHFULL. Your gas cooker is the centre of your kitchen, no matter where you camp.

- Do not use your gas stove in a closed space – like the inside of your tent.
- Let a standalone gas stove cool down before you store it.
- Make sure your standalone gas stove is stable and level. If it falls over, you're not only losing your meal, but your camping gear might catch fire.
- Usually, a caravan's gas stove is mounted on a work surface, but some of them are positioned transversely, meaning one burner is behind the other. Be careful that the front burner does not burn you when you reach over to get something from the cupboard. Rather take out everything you need from the cupboards before you light the stove.
- If your gas stove does not have its own lighter, first light your match and hold it at the burner. Now only turn the gas stove's control knob open. The reverse can be dangerous, as gas builds up at the burner and can "explode" when you strike the match.
- When you're done cooking, turn off the valve at the gas cylinder too, especially when you are towing. Open it just before you use the stove.
- If the cylinder is empty, close the valve before you remove the gas pipe. If you leave the valve open, oxygen can mix with remaining LPG particles in the cylinder – making the contents highly flammable and likely to explode if someone strikes a match.



SAFETY FIRST. Close the valve at the cylinder when not in use.

DID YOU KNOW?

Here are some interesting facts from the World Liquefied Gas Association (WLGA).



A household in a developing country uses two tonnes of firewood per year. If 240 million households were to switch to gas, a forest the size of Belgium would be saved.



COAL



OIL

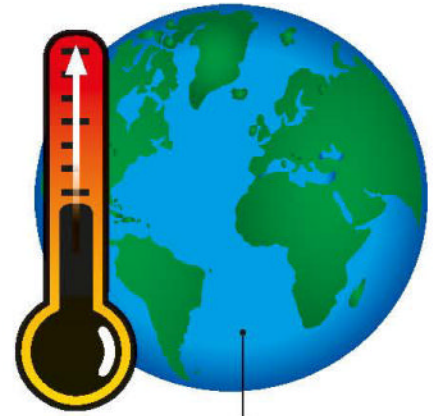


LPG

The carbon footprint of LPG is 20% lower than heated oil and 50% lower than coal.



In America, 80% of farmers rely on LPG, in various ways.



LPG burns cleanly and produces almost no particles or soot. (Soot's contribution to global warming is estimated at 20%.)

In Brazil, 95% of households use LPG for cooking.



LPG has a very long shelf life and does not break down.



Wood and coal emit 150 times more carbon monoxide than LPG.



Drive & Camp says Just like fuel, gas is cheaper on the coast than inland.

According to Sapia's website, the maximum trade price in February was R3,49/kg on the coast and R3,79/kg in Gauteng.

According to a 2013 presentation by the department of energy titled 'Transformation of the Gas Sector', the maximum price has been regulated by

the government since 2010.

The LPGSA points out that prices before COVID-19 were linked to the fuel price, but since July 2020, a new pricing model has been used.

* For consistency, we use bar as the unit of pressure for gas, but kilopascal (kPa) is more commonly used internationally.

****Text sources** Liquefied Petroleum Gas Association of South Africa (LPGSA) and lpgas.co.za; esenssys.com; wikipedia.org; worldliquidgas.org; lpg-apps.org; elgas.com.au; Multiple-Household Fuel Use – A Balanced Choice Between Firewood, Charcoal and LPG, a 2014 report from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development; energypedia.info; researchgate.net; opentextbc.ca; thegasman.co.za; esapyronics.com; campcraft.co.za; sapia.org.za; Market Inquiry into the LPG Sector, a report from the South African Competition Commission dated March 2017; mayoclinic.org

Darkness, begone!

A reliable and portable light source is essential on an overland trip where you might camp far from the nearest power outlet.

Words **Cyril Kloppe** Photos **Supplied**



In unfamiliar lands, your vehicle and tent are your home, and it's crucial to create a safe and comfortable dwelling. Yes, the starry sky is enchanting, but you don't want to stumble over tent pegs in pitch darkness or struggle to repair a flat tyre.

In this article, we discuss lumens (abbreviated lm), candlepower (cp), and Kelvin (K). A lumen is a unit of light, with 1 candlepower

equivalent to 12,57 lm. Kelvin is a unit of temperature, and when it comes to light, a low Kelvin number means the light appears redder (or warmer), while a high number indicates bluer (or cooler) light.

Here are eight types of portable lights you might consider for overland trips. We're not saying you need them all, but at least a few of them.



Gas lantern

We can thank the Chinese for the gas lantern. They have been using it since 500 BCE, when they ingeniously piped natural gas from salt mines into their homes using bamboo pipes to light a flame.

However, it was the Austrian Carl Auer von Welsbach who patented the mantle in 1887, thus making modern gas lanterns possible. Most of our readers probably grew up with this type of lantern.

It consists of a gas canister (or larger gas cylinder) with a lamp that screws on top. Inside the lamp is von Welsbach's delicate mantle, which is filled with gas and then lit to produce light. If you turn the gas valve to its widest, the model shown here emits a whopping 1 275 lm (or 100 candlepower) – more than enough for even a large bush camp.

The beauty of this device is that you can unscrew the lamp tomorrow morning, screw on a griddle, and make breakfast!

Electric camp light

Thomas Edison did not invent the light bulb, he merely patented it. There is no single inventor as it took several years and multiple scientists to develop the technology for the modern electric light bulb.

The light shown here relies on a 220 V power supply and is particularly suited for your caravan's awning. It has zip ties that can be attached to a tent pole, allowing you to hang it exactly where you want.

We recommend this type of light because you can choose the type of bulb you want to screw in. You can create a cozy atmosphere with the same 2 700 K warm light bulb that hangs in your living room, or brighten everything up with a 4 000 K white light bulb like in your kitchen, or even a dim 9 W bulb so you can barely see each other on a romantic Valentine's Day date.



Battery lantern

When you camp in the wild, far from the nearest power supply, a battery lantern comes in handy. The advantage of this type of lantern is that you can charge it during the day by plugging it into your vehicle's 12 V socket while driving.

These devices are all portable, and most have a dial that allows you to adjust the brightness of the light. The model shown here ranges from 50-550 lm (or 4-44 candlepower). Our experience is that the LED of this type of lantern usually emits a cool, white light. It's great when you're cooking or need to see clearly what's going on around you, but it definitely doesn't create a cozy atmosphere and it also attracts mosquitoes.

The technology in these lanterns has become so commonplace that they are dirt cheap. You can also use it at home if Eskom falters again.



Headlamp

This light's origin lies in the mining industry, where workers needed a way to see in the dark while using their hands to dig out coal.

The modern version also allows your hands to be free to swing a spanner while you lie on your back under your rig. And yes, even during the day, you need light when inspecting the chassis of your overland vehicle.

Because you wear it on your head, it is usually small and light, which means you can store it in the cubby hole. Choose one that has a strobe setting so you can place it on the back of your bakkie's canopy to warn other motorists that there's a guy lying under his bakkie with his feet in the road.

You don't need to buy a high-end headlamp with a light beam as bright as the sun. In our experience, for repair work in poor light conditions, you only need to see clearly up to an arm's length. For this, 200 lm (16 candlepower) is more than enough.

String lights

Okay, we admit these are definitely not essential lights, but your camping experience will be so special if you hang a string of these lights on your caravan's rally tent or your rig's awning.

The lights use small and economical LEDs and usually don't need to be plugged into a power socket because they often have a rechargeable battery and a solar panel you attach to the roof of your trailer.

They create a festive atmosphere, especially over Christmas, and the photos of your campsite will inspire your people at home to join in the camping next time!



Spotlight

In some wildlife reserves, you're allowed to go looking for animals in the dark, and then it's always useful to have this type of light with you. (Of course, you should not blind a predator that is about to pounce on its prey.)

The device shown here shines at 3 200 lm (or 255 candlepower) – the strongest light on these pages. Besides searching for animals, it has other uses: your travel companion can hold the light and shine the beam where you are working with your hands, or you can use it for night fishing or hunting. Choose one with a pistol grip, as it makes it easier to aim from your vehicle. There are also spotlights with a battery in the grip so you can use it for a few minutes outside your vehicle – for example, if you need to search for something you lost in the bush.



USB light

This little device is not as useless as it looks, because sometimes you just need a little bit of light (this little guy shines at 12 lm or 1 candlepower). One of its many uses is to plug it into the USB socket of your laptop; now you can see the keyboard clearly in the dark while typing an email about the day's events.

It also comes in handy in your SUV. Plug it into the USB socket, bend its arm downwards, and now you cast light on that cavity under the centre console that is usually shrouded in darkness.

You can also plug it into a power bank and then you have a ceiling light in your rooftop tent without needing to use an extension cord.

LED work lights

There are various types of work lights on the market, but we can recommend these three. A headlamp will only get you so far before you need to bring out a bigger light.

This type of light is too powerful to use in your camp kitchen, as it will eventually give you a headache if the light beam catches your eye. They are more suited to be next to you, behind you, or above you when you dig out the dry grass behind your bakkie's radiator or shake out the air filter to remove sand and dust. At *Drive & Camp*, we have exactly the kind of work light like the one top left in the photos shown here, and it has served us well over the years.

You can also get LED panels with a flexible arm and a magnetic base. The idea is that you lift your vehicle's bonnet in the dark and attach the magnetic base to the underside of the bonnet. Then you connect the power cord with two crocodile clips to the two poles of the car battery and bend the arm so the light shines exactly where you need it. Lastly, there is an LED standing lamp you can carry around and cast light on the part of your vehicle you want to work on. The model shown here shines at 800 lm (64 candlepower). This is also used by anglers who fish at night.

Choose one that not only charges through 220 V but also through your vehicle's 12 V socket.

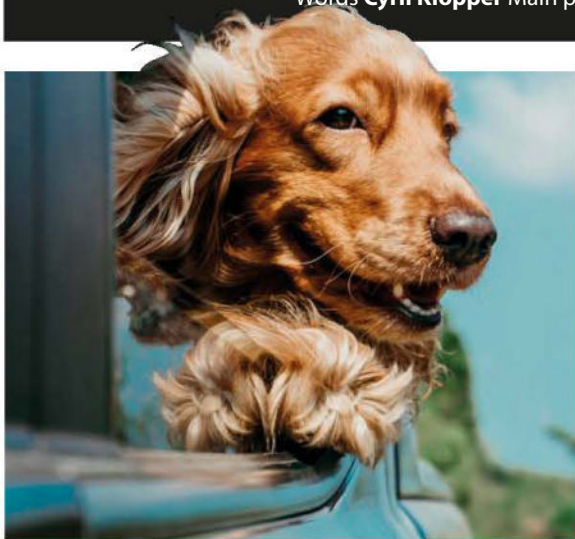




A DOG'S LIFE

Dogs are excellent camping companions – cats and goldfish, well... not so much. Here's a list of 16 items that will enhance camping for your four-legged friend.

Words **Cyril Klopper** Main photo **Christoph Wesi, Unsplash** Photos **Provided**



Tips for the road

- Keep your car window open if possible. Rover will enjoy the drive much more if he can sniff the scenes flashing by.
- Stop about once every hour and give your woof enough time to sniff the marks of all the dogs that have stretched their legs here before.
- Be careful when you stop at a roadside picnic spot, as rotten food or sharp bones will ruin Rex's holiday (and yours!).
- It's better for Coco to ride in the backseat than on your lap. It might feel cruel, but she's safer there.
- Bring Trixie's favourite blanket or toy along. It's particularly comforting, especially in unfamiliar surroundings.
- Use the time at a motorway service area's lawn to play with Buddy, thereby dispelling some of his energy (and breaking the monotony).
- Leave a family member with your dog while you visit a farmstall. Max will get anxious if all his people disappear and he's left alone in a parking lot.

GET YOURS HERE animalgear.co.za k9dispatch.co.za canineandco.co.za samandmolly.co.za petplus.co.za



EARTH RATED POO BAGS

The business

Some campsites will make an exception so you may bring your fur child – something you should discuss with them beforehand. But in return for this concession, you will have to pick up your dog's poo. These bags limit bad smells (the bags smell like lavender) and are 100% waterproof. Available in packs of 60 to 300.

Price R155 (pack of 120) at K9 Dispatch.



ROUGHWEAR HIGHLANDS SLEEPING BAG

Snug as a bug

The Highlands sleeping bag is a lightweight, compressible down sleeping bag for your best friend. The half-length zipper leaves a gap large enough so your dog doesn't feel pinned down, but still keeps him snugly warm. The shape of the sleeping bag also allows your dog to curl up rather than lie straight like a human. Available in medium (64 x 85 cm) and large (71 x 110 cm).

Price R2 500 (medium) at Canine and Co.



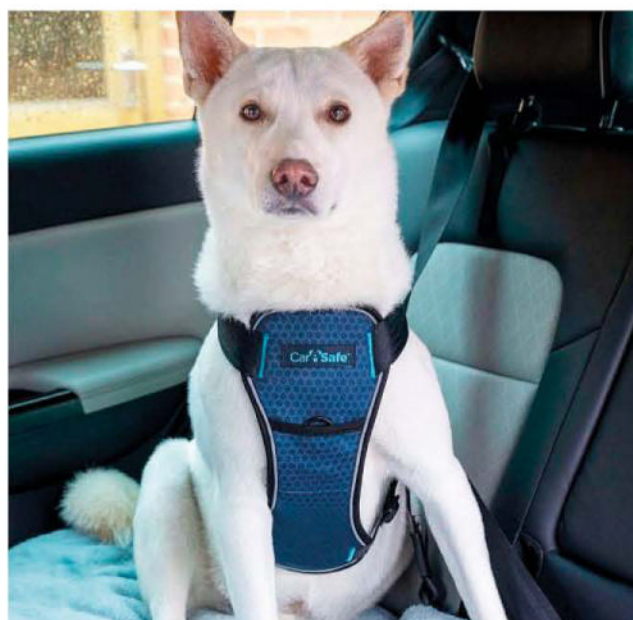
OUTWARD HOUND PUPPY BAG

He ain't heavy

Veterinarians advise you not to let your puppy walk for more than 5-10 minutes at a time. Their bones and muscles are still soft, and long walks can harm their skeleton, causing pain in their old age.

Instead, load your pup into this bag where he can see you and the nature around you. The bag in the photo above is for bigger puppies that weigh around 9 kg.

Price R1 088 (medium) at Canine and Co.

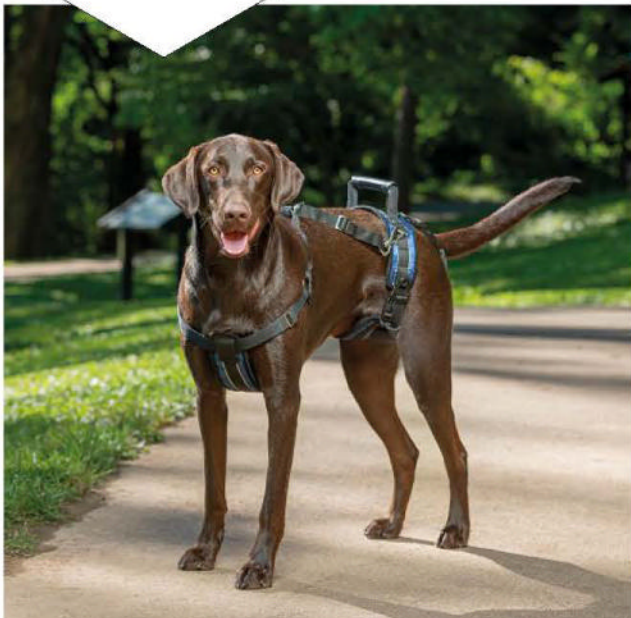


CARSAFE SEAT HARNESS

Road safety

Your car's seat belts obviously don't fit over your dog, but you still want to keep him safe in the event of a collision. CarSafe's seat harness is crash-test certified for dogs up to 32 kg (boxers, terriers and other middleweight dogs) and it hooks onto your vehicle's existing seat belt without modifications.

Price R868 at K9 Dispatch.



SOLVIT CARELIFT LIFTING HARNESS

Portable doggo

This harness wraps around a dog's hips and shoulders. It allows free movement for your dog, but if he needs help climbing a set of stairs due to his age or injuries, you can use the handles on the harness to help him up. It's also available for small dogs with short legs so you can load him into your car.

Price R1 230 (medium) at Animal Gear.



RUFFWEAR SWAMP COOLER JACKET

Cool off

This jacket works as follows: you wet it with cold water, and the resulting evaporation pulls heat from your dog's fur. However, experts warn that these kinds of jackets can do more harm than good. They argue that once the water gets warm, your dog will get even hotter. Consult your vet whether this is a suitable garment for your dog breed's type of fur.

Price R1 450 at K9 Dispatch.

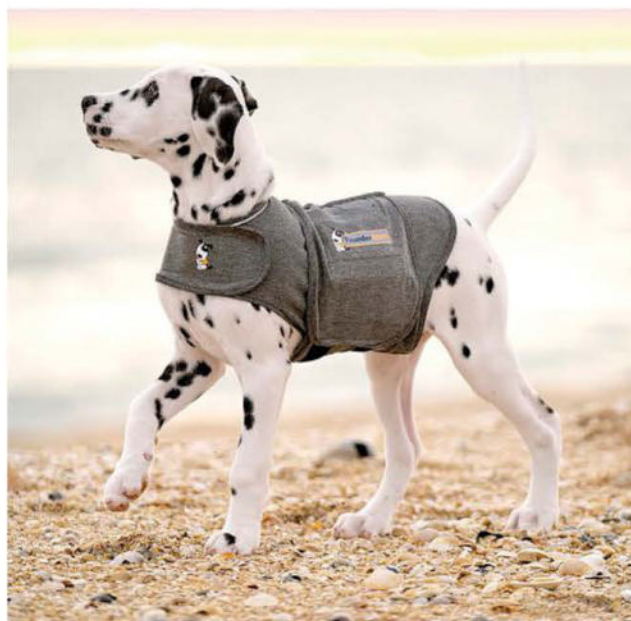


RUFFWEAR GRIP TREX DOG SHOES

Run free

Scorching sand, sharp rocks, thorns – these are all things that can hurt your dog's paws, and you don't want to be looking for a vet in an unfamiliar town to treat your furry friend's sore paw during a holiday. Rover will initially detest the shoes, but he'll get used to them soon enough and eventually prefer to wear them rather than walk barefoot.

Price R968 at K9 Dispatch.



THUNDERSHIRT COMFORT JACKET

No worries

Not all dogs take to holidays equally well. Some pups tremble while others burst at the seams with excitement. This snug jacket gives your dog a reassuring hug. It also helps to keep your dog calm when thoughtless campers shoot fireworks and crackers.

Also available for cats.

Price R995 (small) at Sam & Molly.



KURGO HEATHER DOG BASKET

Little boost

Small dogs also want to see what's going on outside, but they are often too short to reach your car's window. This basket hangs on the headrest of a car seat and the strap's length is adjustable. Use it with the CarSafe seat harness (see previous page) so your little dog pal can safely and sweetly ride in his basket.

Price R1 690 at Sam & Molly.



SPORTDOG BEACON

Where are you?

Your dog enjoys sniffing around the campsite with a temporary pack of dogs at night, but just like with children, there's a curfew.

This light makes it easy to spot your dog in the dark. The light hooks onto her collar, and you can set it to blink or shine continuously. Available in five colours, the battery lasts 250 hours, and you can turn it off.

Price R295 at K9 Dispatch.



PETSAFE HAPPY RIDE BIKE BASKET

Commuter smarts

It's delightful to go cycling on a guest farm that allows dogs, but older and smaller dogs sometimes struggle to keep up. This basket hooks onto your bike's handlebars and has a built-in cord that clips to your dog's collar so that Chloe can't jump out and chase sheep. The basket even has a canopy that unfolds to protect her from the sun's harmful rays.

Price R995 at Sam & Molly.



RUFFWEAR DAY PACK

Man's best helper

Why should you carry everything when your dog can help? This harness has two pockets that hang on either side of your dog's body, but it won't impede his movement. The manufacturer warns that your dog should never carry more than 25% of his own body weight. It's ideal for a water bottle on one side and dried dog food and a leash on the other.

Price R1 950 at Canine and Co.



WAGWORLD K9 CAMPER MATTRESS

Sleep tight

A soft, woolly dog mattress is fine and dandy at home, but you want something more durable and practical for the bush. Wagworld's K9 Camper is just right for the outdoors, as it has no hiding place for ticks and spiders, it's easy to clean, and it will provide years of service. Available in large, extra-large and enormous.

Price R970 (large) at Pet Plus.



RUFFWEAR K9 FLOAT COAT JACKET

Swim, Roxie, swim!

Some dogs, like bull terriers and staffies, struggle to swim. So if you want to take them on your kayak on the Orange River or for a long weekend on a houseboat, you need one of these life jackets. The jacket's bright colour and reflective stripes make it visible in the dark, and handles on the back help you pull Roxie from the water.

Price R2 180 at K9 Dispatch.



KURGO REAR SEAT BARRIER

Know your place

Attach the barrier to the back of your front seats so your dog can stay where she belongs – for the sake of driving safety. The mesh window allows you to use your rearview mirror to keep an eye on your dog. Yes, we know she just wants a little love, but it's better to keep her drool and fur confined to the back of your vehicle's interior.

Price R1 225 at K9 Dispatch.



SOLVIT DELUXE XL TELESCOPIC PLANK

Helping plank

Some large breeds, like Great Danes, struggle to jump into the back of your bakkie or into your SUV's luggage space, despite their long legs. This plank weighs 8 kg and is 2,2 m long when extended. It can carry 136 kg and is thus sturdy enough to even load a Boerboel. The plank is obviously also suitable for making life easier for old dogs with stiff joints.

Price R5 500 at Animal Gear. 🐾

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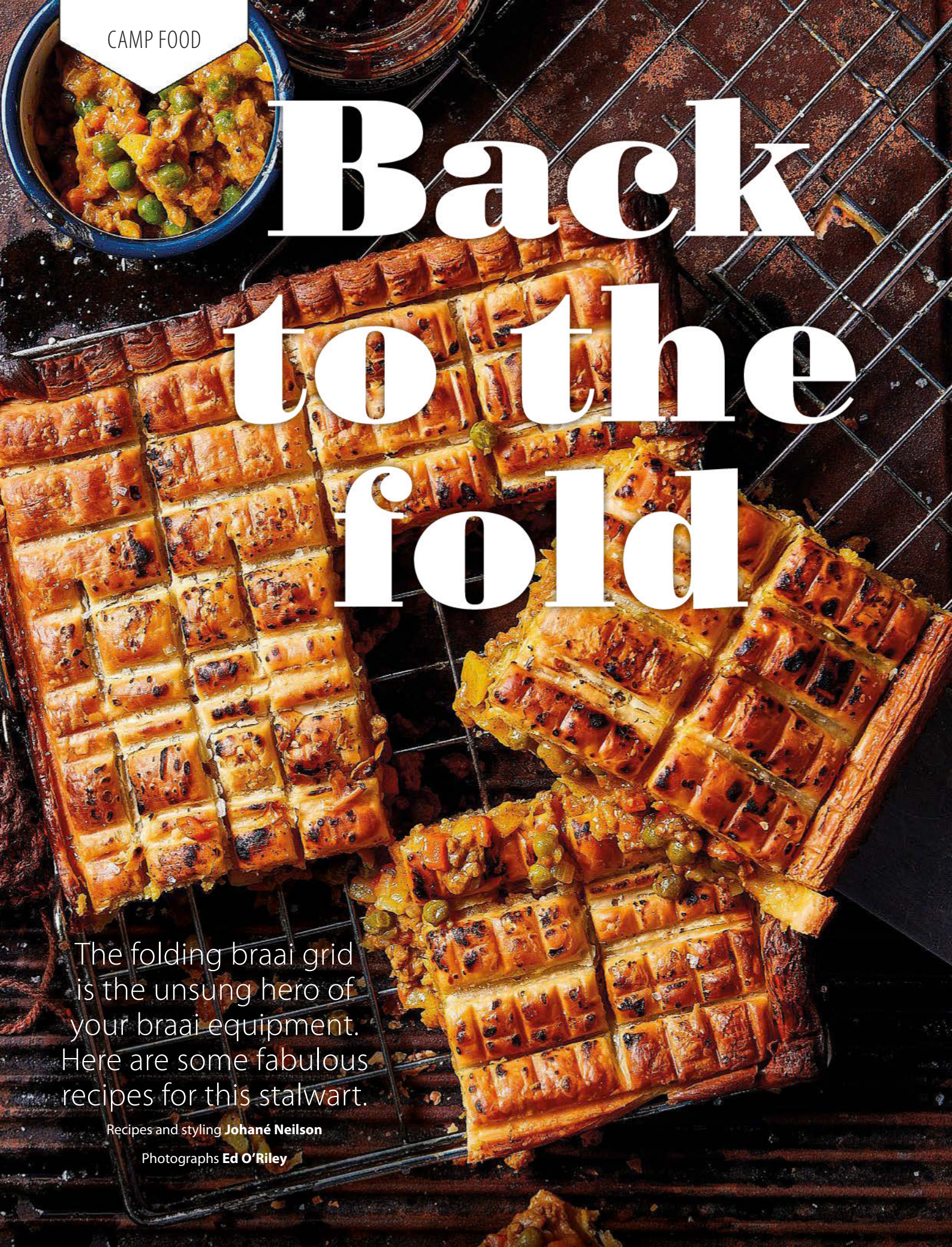
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CAMP FOOD

Back to the fold

The folding braai grid is the unsung hero of your braai equipment. Here are some fabulous recipes for this stalwart.

Recipes and styling **Johané Neilson**

Photographs **Ed O'Riley**

CURRY MINCE BRAAI PIE

Freezer alert!

Make the filling for this pie at home, flatten it like a pancake in a ziplock bag, and then freeze it. This makes making supper at your destination as easy as, well, pie!

Ingredients

(serves 6)

- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 large carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 tablespoon olive oil (plus extra for brushing)
- 500 g mince
- 1 tablespoon turmeric
- 1 tablespoon mild curry powder
- 1 heaped spoonful each of apricot jam and chutney
- A dash of apple cider vinegar
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 2 rolls (400 g each) puff pastry, as large as your grid, thawed (I love the All Butter Puff Pastry Sheets from Woolies – they come in two pieces and are flat frozen, which makes assembly much easier)

Here's how

Fry the onion and carrot together in the olive oil until glossy and soft. Add the mince to the pan and fry until beautifully golden brown – continuously break up the meat with a spatula or wooden spoon.

Season the meat mixture well with salt and pepper, and add the turmeric and curry. Pour in 1 cup of water and simmer until almost dry. Stir in the jam, chutney, vinegar and peas. Cook over low heat for a few more minutes. Allow the mixture to cool completely.

Freeze the mince in a ziplock bag. Make sure it's flat for ease of transport later.

Make the pie Thaw the filling. Generously oil a braai grid (ours was 23 x 28 cm). Carefully place the first sheet of pastry on the deep side of the folding grid. Put the filling in the middle of the pie with a 2 cm open edge all around. Place the second sheet of pastry on top and press the edges together with a fork. Make a few steam holes in the top of the pie.

Close the top of the grid, also well oiled, and braai the pie over moderate coals, turning occasionally, until beautifully crispy and cooked.

Drive & Camp says The mince is also delicious in jaffles or vetkoek, or serve it on steaming white rice with a dollop of yogurt, banana slices and extra chutney.

CHOPS WITH PEAS

Green with envy

The bright green peas add a splash of colour even on the greyest winter day.

Ingredients

(serves 4)

- 12 lamb rib chops
- ¼ cup brown vinegar (or sherry vinegar if you want to be fancy!)
- 1 teaspoon coarsely crushed coriander
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon wholegrain mustard
- ½ teaspoon lemon pepper
- 3 sprigs fresh thyme (or use ½ teaspoon dry thyme)
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 packet (250 g) frozen peas
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (or to taste)
- Juice and grated zest of 1 lemon
- 1 wheel feta (100g)
- ½ teaspoon dry mint

Here's how

Rub the chops all over with the vinegar, coriander, olive oil, mustard, herbs and garlic powder and set aside while you make fire. You'll need hot coals.

Pat the chops dry thoroughly. If you want the meat to brown nicely rather than steam, they need to be dry.

Season the chops generously with salt and braai over hot coals so that the fat crisps up and the edges caramelize.

I prefer mine with a slight pink blush inside, but allow your preference determine the cooking time.

Plunge the peas into boiling water and cook for a few minutes until bright green (small peas only need a few minutes). Drain the peas and season generously with olive oil and lemon juice and zest. Crumble the feta over and season the peas with mint.

Serve the peas on or beside the chops while everything is still hot!

Drive & Camp says If you have fresh mint on hand, a sprinkling of chopped mint leaves is a great addition to the side dish.





PIMENTO PEPPERS AND RICE

Don't go bacon my heart

Serve these beauties as a decadent side dish or enjoy as a light, all-in-one meal.

Ingredients

(serves 6)

- 6 long peppers (often labelled as Pimento peppers)
- 1 packet (250 g) flavoured cooked rice (we used Woolies' Spanish-style rice)
- 12 strips streaky bacon
- 12 cubes cheddar (or use feta)

Here's how

Slice each pepper open lengthwise and scrape out the seeds.

Stuff the peppers generously

with cooked rice and press two cubes of cheese into each one's belly. Wrap two strips of bacon around each stuffed pepper and they're ready for the braai. **Braai** the stuffed peppers in a folding braai grid over moderate coals until the bacon is beautifully golden brown and cooked and the cheese starts to bubble – this is a good sign that the pepper is thoroughly warm. If you like a sticky exterior, glaze the peppers with a bit of honey or sweet chilli sauce. Serve warm.

Drive & Camp says Cooked long-life rice is a quick meal on its own and a bonus for your winter camping pantry. For this recipe, you can also use leftover rice and flavour it any which way.

CHICKEN AND CORN ESPETADA

Pick up sticks

This long espetada is great fun to braai and eat, but of course, you can also thread the chicken on its own and braai the corn separately.

Ingredients

(serves 6)

- 700 g chicken thigh fillets
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ teaspoon smoked paprika
- 4 cobs of corn, each cut into 4 pieces
- 3 tablespoons French-style mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon sriracha sauce
- 1 tablespoon lime or lemon juice
- a few sprigs of thyme (optional)

Here's how

Coat the chicken with the olive oil and season well with

salt, pepper and paprika. You can also use your favourite braai salt or chicken spices – whatever you like.

Thread the corn and chicken alternately on four giant espetada sticks. Work carefully! Gently braai the espetada for about 20 minutes or until almost cooked.

Mix the mayonnaise, sriracha and lemon juice and generously brush it over the espetada while you braai it further until fully cooked and caramelised (at least another 10 minutes). The sauce's flavour improves as it bubbles and chars. Delicious with fresh Portuguese rolls.

Drive & Camp says

The inspiration for the mayonnaise-and-hot-sauce corn is Mexican street food.





PORK AND APPLE KEBABS

An apple a day

These kebabs braai in a flash and combine the flavours of a classic Sunday roast – except they're much easier to make!

Ingredients

(serves 4)

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- A pinch smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon dry garlic powder
- A pinch brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon mustard powder
- 800 g pork fillet, cut into 12 cubes
- 1 green apple, cored and cut into large cubes
- 1 red onion, cut into wedges
- 8 bay leaves (optional)

Here's how

Mix the olive oil, paprika, garlic, brown sugar and

mustard powder together and rub into the pork cubes, making sure entire surface is covered.

Thread the meat, apple cubes, red onion wedges and bay leaves (if using) onto long skewer sticks. Season well with salt and pepper.

Braai the kebabs in a folding grid over hot coals with a bit of flame until the meat and apple are nicely charred here and there with flavourful black lines. The meat should be just cooked but still juicy. Serve with garlic bread or your favourite starch and extra mustard or tzatziki.

Drive & Camp says The fillet braais very quickly – for a juicier cut that can endure a bit more heat, try pork neck or shoulder blocks.

WINGLETS WITH HONEY AND CIDER

Drunken chicken

When the weather suddenly turns and you need braai quickly, it's a good idea to cook the chicken in the sauce before giving it a final colour and sticky coating over the coals. This is one of my favourite sauces.

Ingredients

(serves 6 as a starter)

- A whole lot of chicken winglets (wings that have been halved)

FOR THE SAUCE

- 1 onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 2 tablespoons runny honey
- 1 teaspoon dry garlic powder (or use garlic flakes)
- ¼ cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon each salt and cracked black pepper
- 1 bottle (330 ml) dry apple cider

Here's how

Mix all the sauce ingredients together in a flat-bottomed potjie – I like to add a chilli or two, but that's optional.

Simmer the chicken for 15-20 minutes in the sauce until just cooked – the size of your wings will determine how long. Remember, it will still be going on the braai.

Remove the chicken and pack them tightly in a braai grid.

Reduce the sauce until thick and glossy and keep ready for basting.

Braai the cooked wings while generously basting them with the reduced sauce. Aim for golden brown and sticky. This is a delicious starter, straight off the grill. Keep the wet wipes handy!

Drive & Camp says Sprinkle sesame seeds over the shiny wings as an optional extra. 🍴



Tip We came across the neat folding stainless-steel braai and rectangular pan with handles at Unmet Precision Cutting. Speak to **Bevan Morris**. unmet.co.za

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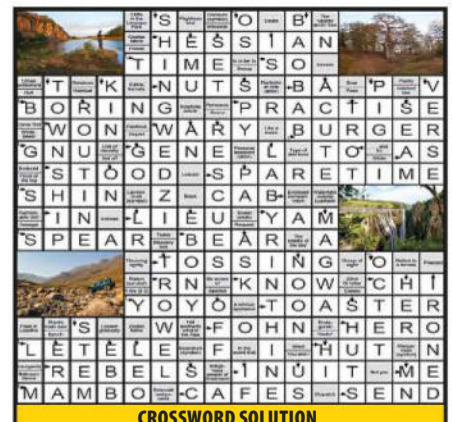
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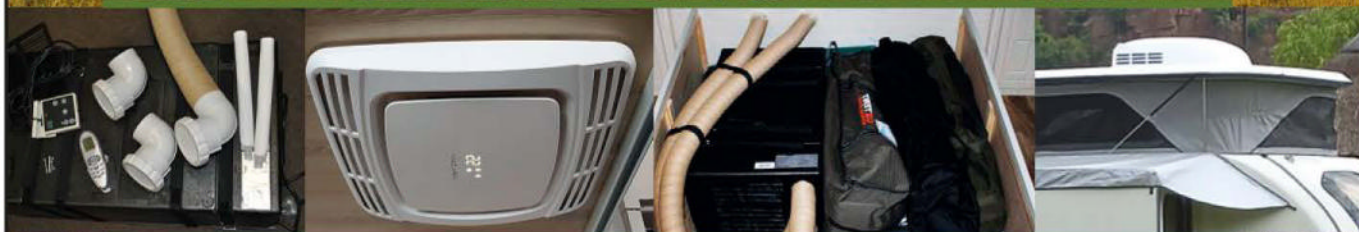
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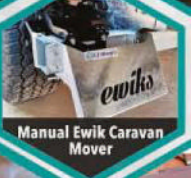
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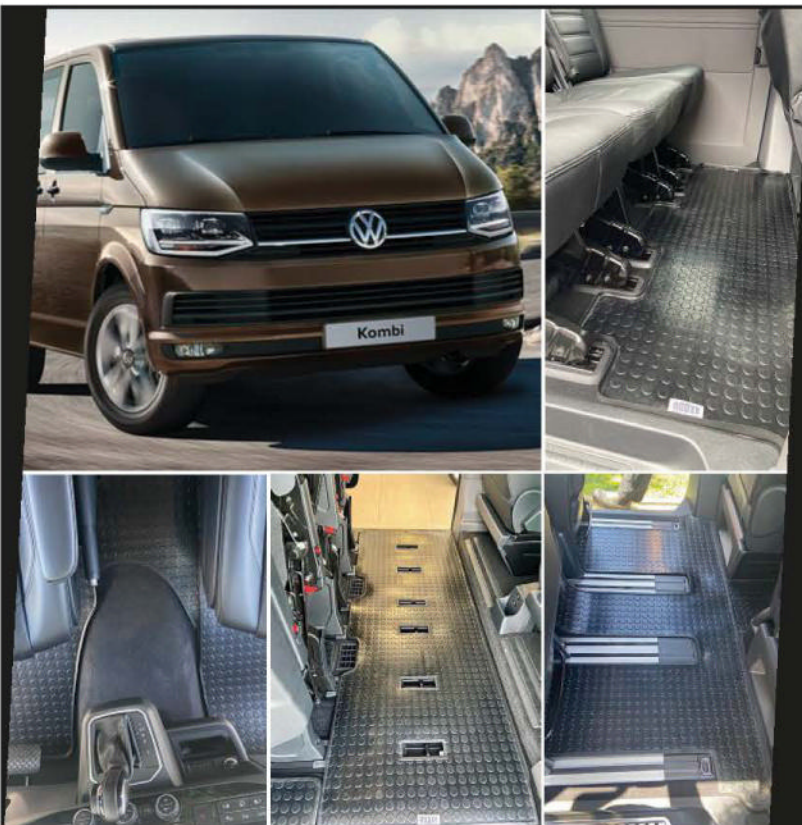
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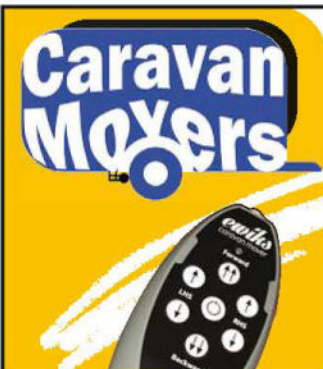
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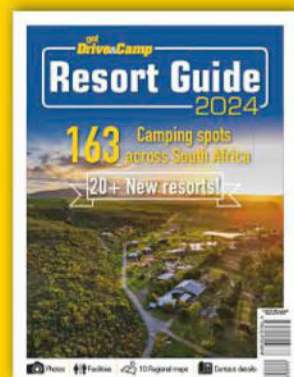


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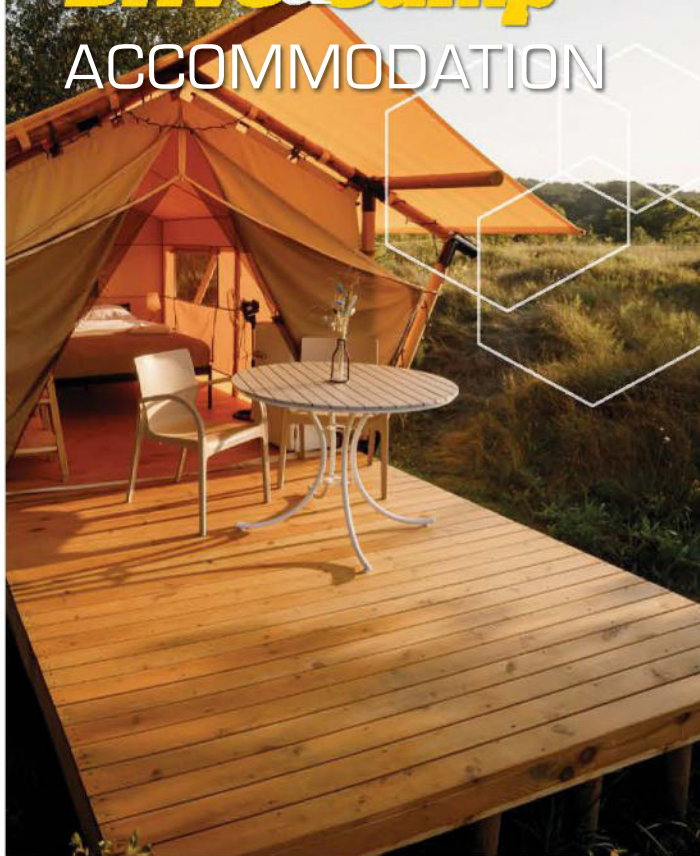
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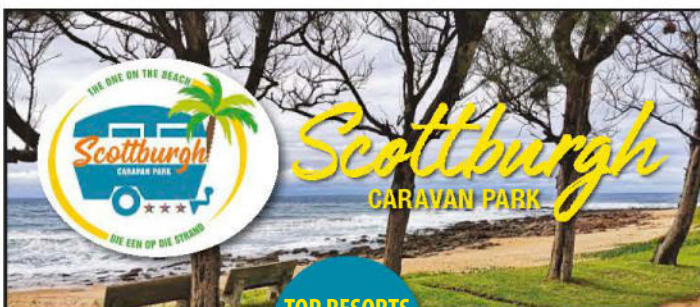
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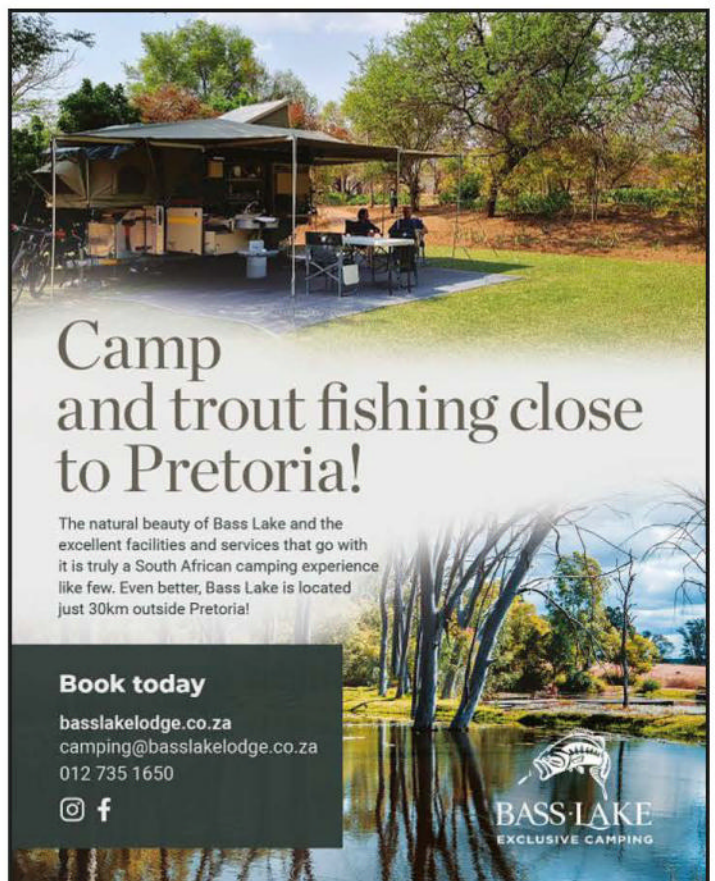
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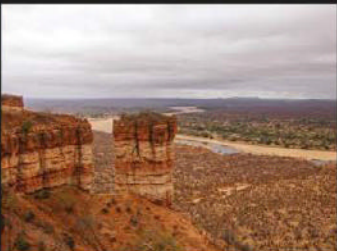
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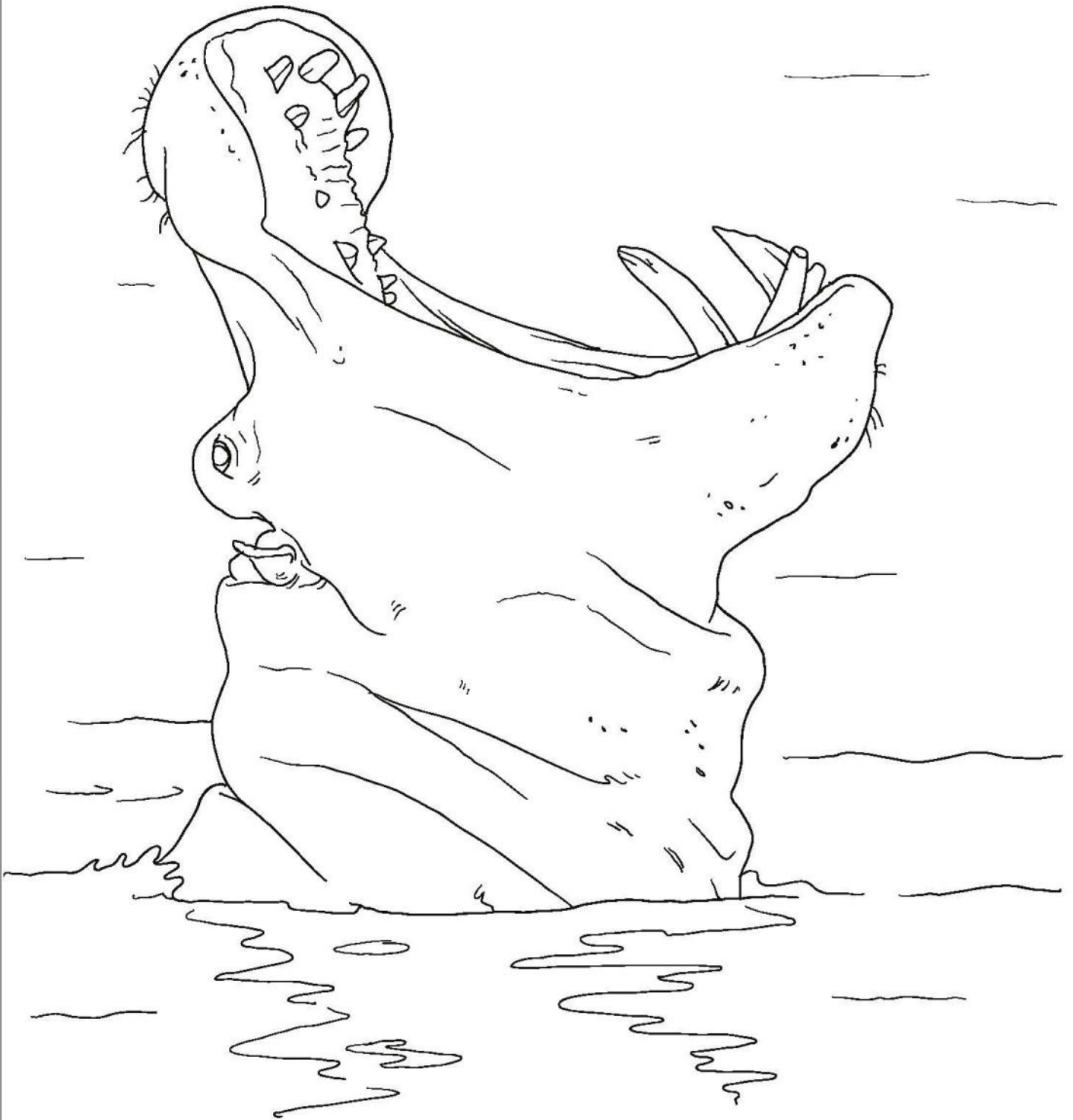
CROSSWORD

Exercise your brain with this crossword puzzle. Research suggests it is not only beneficial to your language and cognitive skills, but it's also a great way to relax. Get a pencil (and eraser) and enjoy. The solution to the previous puzzle is on page 107.

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... else!								Carpet		
		Dark grey		Hard, durable wood			Discharge			
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Get your crayons and colouring pencils out and bring life to this line drawing.

WORD SEARCH

Search for the hidden words in the list and tick them off as you find them.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCES

There are at least 10 differences between the two illustrations. See if you can find them all!

MAZE

Show the maze who's boss. Remember to first do it in pencil, just in case you make a mistake.

Word search

C L E D J S A W O E T N G F U Q D L E Y C C
J X A R A G O R N E L E S S A R N W J S P N
Z E D U Q F N C V K H O E E T J K G A G U Z
U J W H Z R S T I U S M C Y G E M I U B O H
I O Q G L O R F I N D E L U V E L F O C M Z
O E C U D D N X V I X L C S H H J R S O I L
L Y J T G O L L U M M B Z P C Y O S O Y D O
U I N F U B G Y L U Y D A N H M C P M N K N
O D Z J I A V W N Y J R M H I B W U S M D D
J W T B N G H Z A Z F D S R M I F N A Q O O
O E C O P G U M B I S I E B W S G V M W P F
O O U F T I W U E S H J T Q O L D U W E E T
S A U R O N F Y M C U I A P X H H T I N R Q
I Z T R D S L J R G W I R M V A X E S Z E N
Z G P H S A M M R A R W E N O T L U E I G J
N D U J I B Z E J W P I B Y R B E S G R R O
T R E E B E A R D W C Y N T E E G J A T I X
R A U E J I P R T B V I G D O B O T M G N I
W X R F P F X Y U Q L E I R D A L A G P T Y
I A D A A O A B J X B T M I F W A G E Q O Y
L H E W J M K R O B K Y L X E J S O E F O L
O C O R H A Q A A P W B I S F T K T H Z K I
P L W M K S C N W M Q L S K W N E O S C C Y
S V H X O E W D A Y I U I T G B O S E R S Z
Y A W C U T N Y K T I R W O X N O L I U H O
O A R T E J D B M U G S A C D Q E P V R K S
V W G U W G Z U R J T M F Z T B S B Z Q I W
F O L I M D V C B A E H Y R O E M Z T A Z E
O A O C W A D K T T N O F R K W I V M T O S
L W F Z J M N J S C N D N R B M Y E T A U E

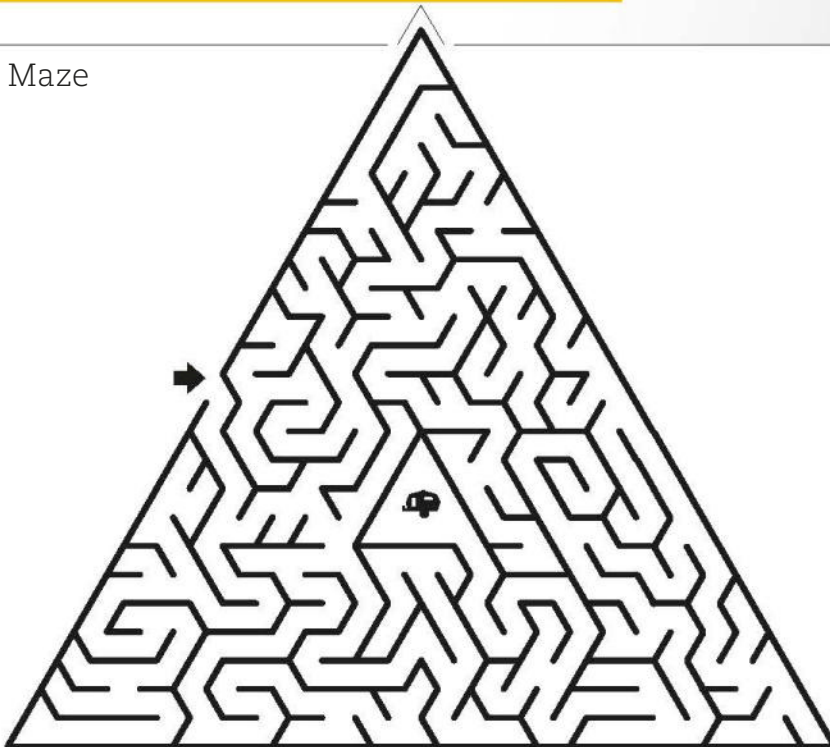
LORD OF THE RINGS CHARACTERS

Aragorn Elessar	Elrond	Gollum
Arwen	Faramir	Legolas
Frodo Baggins	Samwise Gamgee	Saruman
Boromir	Galadriel	Sauron
Merry Brandybuck	Gimli	Peregrin Took
Celeborn	Glorfindel	Treebeard

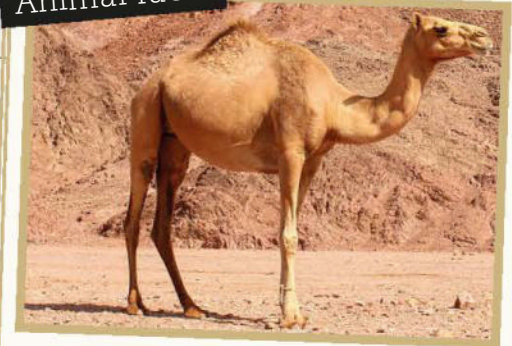
Spot the differences



Maze



Animal facts



CAMELS (CAMELUS)

- There are three types of camels in the world, Dromedary, Bactrian and wild Bactrian camels.
- The camel's hump is its most notable feature, which isn't used to store water but in fact only fat.
- Healthy camels with significant fat stores can survive without food or water for a couple of weeks.
- To keep desert sand out of their eyes they have three eyelids and two sets of eyelashes.
- They are fast drinkers and can swallow as much as 98 liters of water in 10 minutes.
- They are strong and can carry a single rider over a 100 kilometres in a day, at a pace of roughly 10 kilometres per hour, ideal for desert travelling.

Watch your weight on the roof

If you're considering fitting a roof rack, take heed of the various load limitations involved, says **Mic van Zyl**.

An important consideration for any 4x4 overland enthusiast is the weight of all the gear you intend taking with you in or on your vehicle, as well as the available space to pack this gear.

Double-cab bakkies are versatile as they have a large load bin area in the rear of the vehicle. Fitting a canopy to secure its contents and protect it from the elements is a very popular upgrade. In the case of SUVs however, there is less packing space in the rear.

Should you need more space, a roof rack is a popular addition. If you're thinking about fitting a roof

rack to the roof of your bakkie, or on the canopy, you need to be aware of the various load limitations involved. There are essentially four weight numbers to take into account and you must remain within these parameters.

The first and most important weight limit is the dynamic load rating of the vehicle's roof. This number refers to the weight that you can safely attach to the roof of your vehicle while the vehicle is travelling to your destination. This specification should be available from the vehicle manufacturer, although this info is not as readily available as you might think. Also bear in mind that some manufacturers specify a reduction in this limit by up to 30% when travelling over rough terrain.

The second weight limit is the static load rating of the vehicle's roof. This is the weight that the roof can carry when the vehicle is stationary, like at a camp site. This figure is not quoted or available from any of the vehicle manufacturers that I investigated. Industry experts however, all specify that this weight should be between two to three times the dynamic load rating. This makes sense as there are no dynamic driving forces being exerted on the roof of the vehicle by the roof rack and your gear while parked.

The third weight consideration is the weight of the roof rack itself. This, of course, forms part of that allowable load rating of your vehicle's roof. A lighter roof rack will allow for more weight in gear to be carried.

The last load rating of importance is the load limit of the roof rack itself. This info is quite readily available from reputable roof rack manufacturers. I have found that the load rating of most of the popular roof racks far exceed the load rating limits of the vehicle application.

To put this all into context, let's look at two typical examples for two popular overlanding vehicles.

The Toyota Hilux double cab has a dynamic load rating for its roof of 75 kg on road and 50 kg off-road. The static load rating is around 190 kg. A popular aluminium roof rack for a double-cab Hilux weighs around 25 kg. When fitting this roof rack to your Hilux double cab, you only have a possible 50 kg of weight that you can put onto the roof rack on road and 25 kg off-road. Most roof top tents weigh more than this, so consider rather fitting a pair of load bars at around 8 kg which will leave you with a possible load of 67 kg.

In the case of the Land Cruiser 76 station wagon, the dynamic load rating for the vehicle's roof is 150 kg both on and off road. The static load rating would thus be around 250 kg. A full-length aluminium roof rack for the Cruiser 76 typically weighs around 42 kg. This equates to a possible dynamic load of around 100 kg and a static load (safely) up to 210 kg. This is ample for a roof top tent and two adults in camp at bedtime.

The load rating of most aluminium canopies also far exceeds the load rating specifications for the rear tub of the double-cab bakkie. What you need to look for here is the way in which the canopy is mounted to the rear tub of the bakkie.

Definitely steer clear of canopies that are attached to the upper edge of the tub sides. Rather go with a canopy that uses dedicated mounting brackets that attach to load-bearing mounting points inside the tub. Also bear in mind that any weight that high up will affect your vehicle's on-road handling impacting safety. Always remain within safe limits when overlanding.



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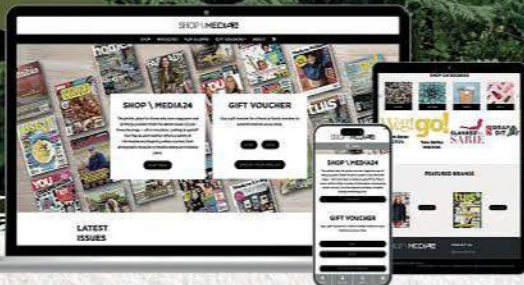
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The ways of a swallow

There are some important considerations if you want to camp in one place for months on end. But once you embrace this lifestyle, you won't regret it, says **Neels van Heerden**.

In South Africa, the comings and goings of so-called camp swallows – people who stay in one place for a long time before moving to the next, usually to escape the icy temperatures of winter – are well known. You find such groups all around the world: in America, they are known as snowbirds while Australians call people in this important market segment grey nomads.

I can understand why people like this lifestyle, but the decision to relocate and knock in your tent pegs somewhere else for an extended period of time

should not be taken lightly. There are so many questions you first need to answer. Will you sell your home and hearth? Or will your children get an early inheritance?

Is your existing caravan suitable for camping for so long? If not, can you simply retrofit it, or do you need to purchase a new one with more bells and whistles? Is it perhaps time to buy that motorhome?

Or something that can be easily set up and taken down, especially if it's just the two of you retirees?

Another element to consider is where you will travel to have a home for a few months at a time. It's obvious that you will look for destinations that suit your taste. So, are you looking for a variety of bush and rough terrains, vast open spaces, the coast, large resorts, national parks, a view over mountains and valleys, or do you want to camp on a farm?

The final question for which you need a definite answer is whether you can be self-sufficient. If the answer is yes, you can start planning.

What will influence your planning? Will you follow cultural festivals? Must there always be something to do nearby, or do you prefer a leisurely tour from one destination to the next with nothing rushing you?

This is a lifestyle where there is an interaction and a balance between humans and nature. However, the ability to embrace the tranquillity of nature doesn't simply arrive by itself. People who have had a hectic career sometimes struggle to shake off the haste of modern life. I can understand this; it's certainly not easy to simply switch off from work and social obligations. It is therefore entirely natural if it takes you a while to fully embrace the riches of nature.

This kind of life also gives you time to reflect on the highs and lows of your "previous" life, ageing, and retirement.

Such reflection can lead to a deeper understanding of yourself, but also to find your and your partner's spiritual place in a new environment. Your senses need to adapt to enjoy the little things around you, such as a weaver that keeps building its nest until the female approves, or a dung beetle that buries a dung ball in front of your veranda tent.

“

People who have had a hectic career sometimes struggle to shake off the haste of modern life

”

Another important factor to consider is your physical health. In this regard, there are quite a few advantages for swallows. Apart from activities like hiking, mountain climbing, and swimming, exposure to sunlight (vitamin D), relaxation by the coast (vitamin Sea), and healthier eating can work wonders. Experts and their research also believe that the fresh air helps to strengthen our immune system and keep blood pressure under control.

Leaving behind a world that was often overwhelming and chaotic need to also provide vitamins for your soul. Your mental health needs to be expanded. You could find inner peace through meditation, yoga, Sudoku, and reading – things you never had time for – and also by taking up new hobbies.

This presents a chance to count the stars and attune to the rhythm of nature. You'll find inner peace, embrace simplicity in life and deepen your appreciation for your partner.





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In Namibia, it often feels like you’re the first person to travel through a landscape, that you’ve been transported to another, wilder era. If exploring the distant parts of our neighbouring country has always been on your bucket list, then this Kunene Region Photography Tour is for you.

Expert guide Douwe Vlok from Heuningland Tours will take a group of 16 people on a self-drive, 4x4 trip of the region. Toast Coetzer will act as your photography guide, offering advice and tips on how to improve your photography skills (all cameras welcome, even smartphones). You’re guaranteed to take more than a few pics that will impress the people back home.

The adventure kicks off at Spitzkoppe – home of the famous Rock Arch – and from there we will traverse some of the dry riverbeds of Damaraland and the Kaokoveld in search of the elusive desert elephant. Once we reach Epupa Falls, we will follow the course of the Kunene River and then take a turn through Etosha on our way home.

This camping tour promises to be unforgettable. The team from Heuningland will ensure that you experience the area’s unique natural splendour and must-see attractions, and you will get to take stunning photos along the way.



KUNENE REGION PHOTOGRAPHY TOUR

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Rate: R30 995 per person.

How does it work? This is a self-drive, camping tour. (Contact Heuningland for the full itinerary.) The rate includes all meals, tents, and park and concession fees. You are responsible for fuel, camping chairs, drinks and snacks. Don’t forget your camera! Toast Coetzer will be your photography guide and he will be on hand to answer all camera-related questions. The group size is limited to 16 people to ensure an intimate experience.

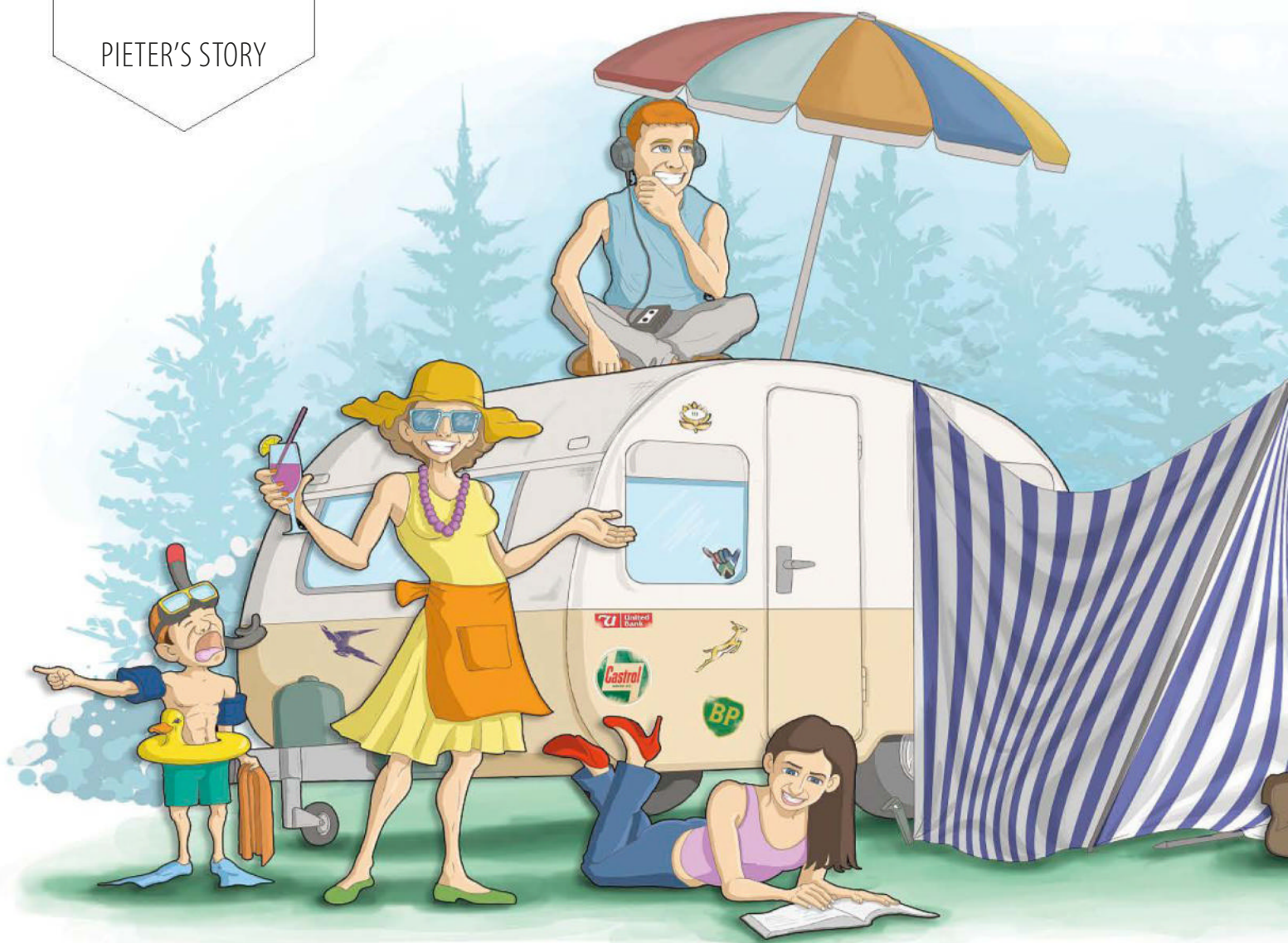
What vehicle do I need? A 4x4 with good ground clearance is essential.

JOIN US!

The best way to see an unfamiliar region is with expert guides, especially if you also want to drive 4x4 routes. We have collaborated with Heuningland to offer a special photographic tour of the Kunene Region. Book your spot now!



For more information and bookings, contact Heuningland.
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The call of the campsite

Are you born a camper, or is it an acquired taste? Or does it happen when the adventure bug bites you one day, prompting that first shaky step towards the wild, wonders **Pieter Redelinghuys**.

I grew up in a home where holidays – especially the big ones in December and January – meant renting the cumbersome two-tone Jurgens 640 with its blue-and-white striped tent from Uncle Tjoep du Toit.

To this day, I don't know how Uncle Tjoep got his name. It probably had something to do with the Castle beer belly that annually burst through four

sets of braces. Or maybe because his father, Tyres du Toit, owned the local tyre shop. Be that as it may, Uncle Tjoep and his wife, Aunt Annatjie (also known as Moeder Melkert), were childless and thus didn't need to entertain a brood of kids during the summer holidays.

That meant we could camp in their caravan, complete with its musty smell

and faded WP tent. Once a year, for four weeks, usually in Mossel Bay's caravan park. Typically in the same spot, though my dad would mutter through clenched teeth afterward: "Never ever again!" Now that I think about it, I can't really blame him for his thinning sense of humour and stretched patience. His travel companions consisted of a moody teenage son with looming skin problems



DW

and a pocket full of schemes (merely curbed by a backpack full of know-how); a teenage daughter keen to socialise; and me, the youngest, supposedly still clinging to my mother's apron strings. If these weren't all the ingredients for a long, exhausting, and challenging holiday, then I don't know what is.

Looking back and if I'm being honest,

I realise that I cut my teeth in this "camp house" of ours. It's probably the same for most town kids who grew up camping in caravans.

My wife was born and raised in the big city, and the idea of camping was alien to her and her family. Indeed, until very recently, she would say she liked camping... as long as her getaway weekend involved four walls and a roof with a private bathroom, preferably en suite with air-conditioned comfort. Thankfully, her view has since changed significantly.

As my older siblings left home, Uncle Tjoep's caravan and tent remained in his yard under the grapevine canopy until one day, he sold it to the local municipal

council. For a long time, I still spotted the caravan on the outskirts of town, where roadworks and sewer schemes were underway. There was no sign of the tent, and the caravan merely provided shelter for the supervisor against the brutal Boland summer heat and, as the seasons changed, the merciless winter cold.

And then, one day, the caravan was gone. I sometimes wonder what became of that Jurgens and the stories it could tell... My dad's toil, sweat, and swearing to get it set up so the milkwood tree would cast its shade just after 14:00 in the afternoon over the area where he would have a nap.

And then, the tent. That ancient tent, heavy as a Springbok prop, which my dad, with the clumsy help of my mom and the two older kids, had to set up while I whined about going swimming in the tidal pool.

I can still hear my mom warning: "Hennie, language... the kids." Our campbeds were in the tent, under yellow MCC mixed coffee and orange Main Line Tobacco tins where the holiday's biscuits and buttermilk rusks were stored. My mom would bake these two weeks before the holiday, hide them away, and threaten us with a slow death if we dared to deplete the stock before we left.

The Jurgens was our base in the caravan park, but also a place where we kids only appeared at meal and bedtime. The rest of the time, we were free-range chickens pecking and scraping wherever we wanted.

The kitchenette housed the black Philips portable radio with its large red Eveready 9V battery, always tuned to the Afrikaans station – today's RSG – always on duty. Because Mom and Dad listened to Monitor in the mornings. I vividly remember my dad always chiming in: "Tossie Lochner, Italy."

In the afternoons, we would braai, back when one could still afford lamb chops. And in the evenings, it was usually "Mossel Bay food" – bully beef with fried onions and mushrooms in a tomato stew. The three of us still call it that today.

Exhausted after a day of swimming, beach cricket, climbing and clambering, I, as the youngest, was hustled off to

shower first before being ordered to bed. There was usually little protest from my end. My brother and sister could stay out until 22:00, provided they were together. It's safe to admit now that this never happened. They had a mutual "I say nothing, you say nothing" arrangement and respected it so well that my parents were blissfully unaware. You can't imagine that today, but those were different times with different evils.

While lying on my mattress, I could hear my parents in the cramped sitting area of the Jurgens chatting and laughing, playing Pontoon with the Stassens, our neighbours who became friends over the many years of camping together.

Even out of season. And I'd listen to the music they played in the background: Cat Stevens' "Matthew & Son," "Bend Me Shape Me" by The Amen Corner, "Jasmine" by The Casuals, Ricky Shane's "Mamy Blue"...

Now, as I think back, I also see the lighthouse beam as it turns and momentarily illuminates the hill above the caravan park. I taste that sweet Frisco coffee and buttermilk rusks for breakfast. The pink milkshake at the Point restaurant. The fresh cob my dad caught just 100 metres from the tidal pool.

And then I wonder: are you born a camper, or can you learn to love it over time? But I realise that it doesn't really matter because, at the end of the day, the purpose of camping is quite simple, isn't it? It's food for the senses. With the return on your investment stored in the bank of memories.

It's time I dust off my six-person tent. As mentioned earlier, my wife has tempered her tune about sleeping outdoors and found herself a good mattress as a compromise. She knows what's coming is inevitable... If you can't beat them, join them.

Now it's my turn to – like my dad back then – set up the tent, while my six and nine-year-olds whine about wanting to swim or jump on the trampoline. Or that they're already hungry, bored, or wondering why there's no WiFi. "Pieter, the language... the kids."

But this is my rite of passage. To create new memories so we remember places, people and things. Just like we did years ago in Uncle Tjoep's Jurgens.

Cybertruck owners' woes

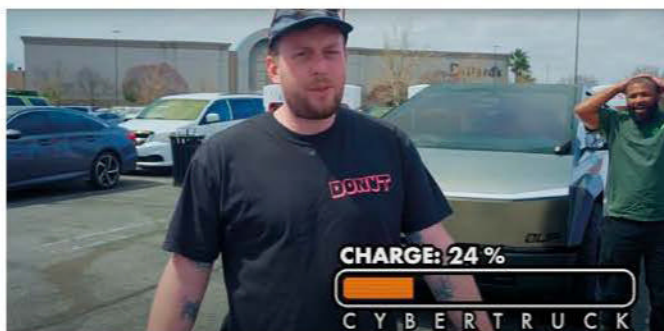
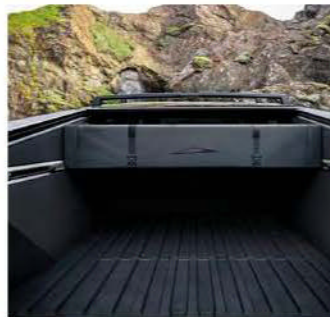
The Cybertruck, a brainchild of South African-born Elon Musk's Tesla car company, garners as much praise as it does criticism. Here's what owners are complaining about.

The last time we wrote about the Cybertruck was in our January 2020 issue, shortly after the bakkie was announced. Four years later, Americans are finally getting the bakkies they ordered way back then. Some customers are brimming with pride, while others are seething.

It is unlikely that the Cybertruck will be sold in any country other than the USA, as Europe has banned it for not meeting their safety standards. Moreover, the Cybertruck's NACS power socket is not compatible with any European charging stations (nor South Africa's), and the bakkie's weight of 3,5 t puts it in the European category that requires a heavy vehicle driving licence.

But what are some Americans complaining about? Around 4 000 Cybertrucks have been sold since January this year, and all have been recalled for faults. The faults include a stuck accelerator pedal, electronics that fail when the bakkie goes through a car wash, and issues with the bodywork that rusts despite being made of stainless steel – the latter claim is contested by Tesla.

Additionally, some owners complain that the information screen (the bakkie has no physical buttons) flashes warnings such as: "Critical steering issue" and "Loss of system redundancy" and, even more worryingly: "Vehicle may suddenly lose electrical power,



Have you spotted any whacky wheels on your travels? Tell us about it and send a photo to go! *Drive & Camp*, PO Box 740, Cape Town 8000 or drivecamp@gomag.co.za



steering, and propulsion, and may be unable to apply the parking brake."

YouTuber Marques Brownlee (with 18,8 million subscribers) complains his Cybertruck's bodywork reflects so much sunlight that it blinds other road users; the body panels don't line up; and the metal easily shows fingerprints. He does, however, like its appearance.

The YouTube couple Kara and Nate (with 3,8 million subscribers), experienced campers, are not impressed with the Cybertruck's pop-up tent called the Basecamp. They find it too complicated, and oddly for an electric vehicle, it lacks electrical supply in the tent, meaning you cannot have a ceiling light or charge your phone. Kara and Nate do appreciate the ride quality.

The YouTube channel Donut (with 8,7 million subscribers), wanted to tackle a 4x4 route, but they had to turn back to the city as the battery could not nearly reach the claimed 300 miles (480 km) – they couldn't even make it to the 4x4 route. They were impressed, however, with how quickly the battery recharges.

And finally, in a typically American response, YouTuber JerryRigEverything (8,6 million subscribers) tested Elon Musk's claim that the bakkie is bulletproof by firing various firearms at it. The bodywork indeed stopped .22 and 9 mm rounds, which surprised Jerry, but a .223 bullet went through the bakkie's door... and a .50-caliber sniper round went right through the whole bakkie.

The Cybertruck costs around \$82 000 (more than R1,5 million) and while it may be bulletproof against small arms fire, you just have to watch out for rainy days and car washes...

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